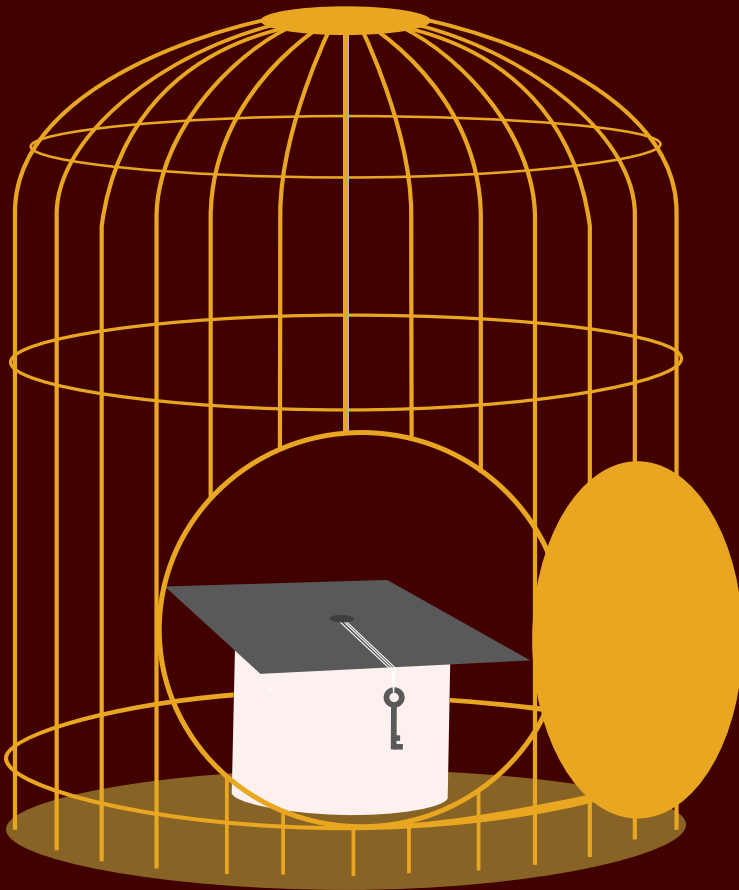


THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

# EDUCATION IN **TANZANIA** IN THE ERA OF GLOBALISATION **CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES**



EDITED BY  
JOE L.P. LUGALLA & J. MARRIOTE NGWARU

VISIT...

LANZAROTE  
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# Education in Tanzania in the Era of Globalisation

## Challenges and Opportunities

Edited By  
Joe L. P. Lugalla & J. Marriote Ngwaru



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“While taking knowledge from all quarters, a university applies that knowledge to the solution of the pressing problems of the world, both at home and abroad.”

*His Highness the Aga Khan*

*Chancellor, The Aga Khan University*

*Speech at the AKU Convocation in Karachi, 1994*



# Contents

|                            |     |
|----------------------------|-----|
| List of Abbreviations..... | vi  |
| Acknowledgment .....       | x   |
| Preamble.....              | xii |
| About the Authors.....     | xv  |

## INTRODUCTION

|                                                                |   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| Stakeholder Views for Government Consideration and Action..... | 1 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|---|

## CHAPTER 1

|                                                                                                                                                      |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Strengthening Education Systems in East Africa:<br>The Need for Actors, Structures and Processes Pulling Together<br><i>J. Marriote Ngwaru</i> ..... | 10 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|

## CHAPTER 2

|                                                                                                           |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Fursa kwa Watoto ‘Opportunities for Children’<br>Programme Tanzania<br><i>Children in Crossfire</i> ..... | 30 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|

## CHAPTER 3

|                                                                                                                                                                         |    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Inclusion and Equity in Education for People with<br>Special Educational Needs in Tanzania: A Critical Dimension<br>to Economic Development<br><i>M. K. Possi</i> ..... | 47 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|

## CHAPTER 4

|                                                                                                                                                                                    |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Industrialisation and Economic Development in Tanzania:<br>Exploring the Role of Evidence-Based Public Policy Making in<br>Education Policy<br><i>Catherine Gerald Mkude</i> ..... | 66 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|

|                                                                                                                                            |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| CHAPTER 5                                                                                                                                  |     |
| New Education Policy, New Curriculum and New Government<br>(5th Phase)                                                                     |     |
| <i>Dr. Fortidas Bakuza</i> . . . . .                                                                                                       | 78  |
| CHAPTER 6                                                                                                                                  |     |
| Making the Link: Integrating Design Thinking,<br>Making and STEMx in Education                                                             |     |
| <i>Dr. Wachira Nicholas and Dr. Susan Crichton</i> . . . . .                                                                               | 86  |
| CHAPTER 7                                                                                                                                  |     |
| “Big Results Now” in Tanzanian Education: A Critical Perspective                                                                           |     |
| <i>Calvin Swai</i> . . . . .                                                                                                               | 103 |
| CHAPTER 8                                                                                                                                  |     |
| Early Years Education and Development: a need or luxury?                                                                                   |     |
| <i>Mary Oluga</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                | 115 |
| CHAPTER 9                                                                                                                                  |     |
| Assessment of Educational Opportunities and Quality for Pupils<br>with Autism Spectrum Disorder in Selected Primary Schools<br>in Tanzania |     |
| <i>Peter E. Mwamwaja</i> . . . . .                                                                                                         | 130 |
| CHAPTER 10                                                                                                                                 |     |
| Modelling Initiatives and Challenges In ICT Development in<br>Teaching and Learning in Secondary Schools: Mbeya City                       |     |
| <i>Peter E. Tengaa</i> . . . . .                                                                                                           | 137 |
| CHAPTER 11                                                                                                                                 |     |
| The Impact of Social Media Networks on Education in<br>Higher Learning Institutions in Tanzania: A case study                              |     |
| <i>Steven Alexander Mavere</i> . . . . .                                                                                                   | 150 |
| CHAPTER 12                                                                                                                                 |     |
| Exploring the Potential of Open Door Management Policy as a<br>New Approach to Governance of Higher Learning Institutions<br>in Tanzania   |     |
| <i>Paul Loisulie</i> . . . . .                                                                                                             | 164 |



|                                                                                                                                           |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| CHAPTER 13                                                                                                                                |     |
| Students' Characteristics and Their Engagement in Blended<br>E-learning Environments in a Tanzanian University                            |     |
| <i>Haruni Machumu and Chang Zhu</i> .....                                                                                                 | 178 |
| CHAPTER 14                                                                                                                                |     |
| Education Policy and Practice in Tanzania: A Critical Conversation                                                                        |     |
| <i>Fulgence Swai S.Saronga</i> .....                                                                                                      | 191 |
| CHAPTER 15                                                                                                                                |     |
| Community Participation in the Education of Children in Tanzania                                                                          |     |
| <i>Rose Ephraim Matete</i> .....                                                                                                          | 207 |
| CHAPTER 16                                                                                                                                |     |
| The Sustainability of Literacy Enhancement Projects in Tanzania<br>in an Era of Globalisation                                             |     |
| <i>Anyanzo John Philip</i> .....                                                                                                          | 226 |
| CHAPTER 17                                                                                                                                |     |
| Challenges Facing the Implementation of a Competency-Based<br>Education and Training (CBET) System in Tanzanian Technical<br>Institutions |     |
| <i>Mariam Ally Tambwe</i> .....                                                                                                           | 242 |
| CHAPTER 18                                                                                                                                |     |
| Challenges and Opportunities for Authentic Student Participation<br>in School Governance: Lessons from Zanzibar                           |     |
| <i>Mohammed Juma Abdalla</i> .....                                                                                                        | 256 |
| Index .....                                                                                                                               | 291 |

## List of Abbreviations

|            |                                                                               |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ACSEE      | Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education Examination                       |
| AKDN       | Aga Khan Development Network                                                  |
| AKFC       | Aga Khan Foundation Canada                                                    |
| AKU-IED-EA | Aga Khan University, the Institute for Educational Development in East Africa |
| ASD        | Autism Spectrum Disorder                                                      |
| BeLE       | Blended E-learning Environment                                                |
| BRN        | Big Results Now                                                               |
| BRNiE      | Big Results Now in Education                                                  |
| CARE       | Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere                              |
| CBE        | College of Business Education                                                 |
| CBET       | Competency-based Education and Training                                       |
| CBP        | Children's Book Project                                                       |
| CP         | Contact Person                                                                |
| CSEE       | Certificate of Secondary Education Examination                                |
| D by D     | Decentralisation by Devolution                                                |
| DEO        | District Education Officer                                                    |
| DIT        | Dar es Salaam Institute of Technology                                         |
| ECD        | Early Childhood Development                                                   |
| ECE        | Early Childhood Education                                                     |
| EFA        | Education For All                                                             |

|         |                                                                                                                    |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ESR     | Education for Self-Reliance                                                                                        |
| ETP     | Education and Training Policy                                                                                      |
| EXCOM   | Executive Committee                                                                                                |
| FkW     | <i>Fursa kwa Watoto</i> (“Opportunities for Children”)                                                             |
| FPE     | Free Primary Education                                                                                             |
| GE      | Girls’ Education                                                                                                   |
| GEM     | Global Education Monitoring                                                                                        |
| GMR     | Global Monitoring Report                                                                                           |
| GPE     | Global Partnership for Education                                                                                   |
| HLI     | Higher Learning Institution                                                                                        |
| ICT     | Information and Communication Technology                                                                           |
| IEG     | Independent Evaluation Group                                                                                       |
| IIEP    | International Institute for Educational Planning                                                                   |
| KBET    | Knowledge-based Education and Training                                                                             |
| KMO     | Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (a measure of sampling adequacy)                                                                |
| KSR     | Kosice Self-governing Region (in Slovakia)                                                                         |
| LANES   | Literacy and Numeracy Education Support                                                                            |
| LGA     | Local Government Authority                                                                                         |
| LGRP    | Local Government Reform Programme                                                                                  |
| M&E     | Monitoring and Evaluation                                                                                          |
| MCC     | Mbeya City Council                                                                                                 |
| MDGs    | Millenium Development Goals                                                                                        |
| MKUKUTA | <i>Mkakati wa Kukuza Uchumi na Kupunguza Umaskini Tanzania</i> (“National Poverty Reduction and Development Plan”) |
| MoEST   | Ministry of Education, Science and Technology                                                                      |
| MoEVT   | Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (now MoEST)                                                          |
| MU      | Mzumbe University                                                                                                  |
| NACTE   | National Council for Technical Education                                                                           |
| NSGRP   | National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty                                                              |
| ODMP    | Open Door Management Policy                                                                                        |

|         |                                                                        |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| OECD    | Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development                  |
| OGP     | Open Government Partnership                                            |
| OI      | Online Interaction                                                     |
| PCU     | Project Coordination Unit                                              |
| PD      | Professional Development                                               |
| PEDP    | Primary Education Development Programme                                |
| PMORALG | Prime Minister's Office – Regional Administration and Local Government |
| PO-RALG | President's Office for Regional Administration and Local Government    |
| PSLE    | Primary School Leaving Exam                                            |
| RCT     | Randomised Control Trials                                              |
| RtR     | Room to Read                                                           |
| SBM     | School-based Management                                                |
| SD      | Standard Deviation                                                     |
| SDGs    | Sustainable Development Goals                                          |
| SEDP    | Secondary Education Development Programme                              |
| SESEA   | Strengthening Education Systems in East Africa                         |
| SMEs    | Small-to-medium Enterprises                                            |
| SPN     | Scholarly Personal Narrative                                           |
| SPSS    | Statistical Package for Social Sciences                                |
| STEMx   | Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and human-centred Design |
| TANU    | Tanganyika African National Union                                      |
| THTU    | Tanzania Higher Learning Institutions Trade Union                      |
| TIA     | Tanzania Institute of Accountancy                                      |
| TIE     | Tanzania Institute of Education                                        |
| TVET    | Technical and Vocational Education and Training                        |
| UDOM    | University of Dodoma                                                   |
| UDOMASA | University of Dodoma Academic Staff Association                        |
| UN      | United Nations                                                         |
| UNESCO  | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation       |

|        |                                                      |
|--------|------------------------------------------------------|
| UNICEF | United Nations International Children Education Fund |
| UPE    | Universal Primary Education                          |
| URT    | United Republic of Tanzania                          |
| WECs   | Word Education Coordinators                          |
| WSDPs  | Whole-school Development Plans                       |
| YMCA   | Young Men's Christian Association                    |
| YWCA   | Young Women's Christian Association                  |

## Acknowledgements

The production of an edited book like this one is not a result of a few individuals, but instead of concerted efforts of cooperation and collaboration of various individuals and institutions. All papers included in this book were presented at a National Education Conference that was organised in Dodoma, Tanzania in November 2016 by the Aga Khan University-Institute for Educational Development, East Africa (AKU-IED-EA).

First and foremost we would like to convey our sincere appreciation to the authors of the different papers that make up the chapters of this book. These authors spent much time to come up with these well-researched expositions that were in turn reviewed by various other scholars. The reviewers' recommendations improved the initial quality of the papers to the final versions that we found suitable for publication in this volume. As editors of this volume, therefore, we take this opportunity to thank all the reviewers for their input and comments as much as the chapter authors.

Many people participated in organising the conference. The members of academic staff and ordinary staff AKU-IED, EA worked tirelessly for more than four months preparing the Conference. We firmly believe that their investment in efforts and time led to the success of the conference and finally at the production of this volume. In this case, their efforts and time spent are highly appreciated.

Also, we would like to mention the financial support from the office of the Provost of Aga Khan University and Diamond Trust Bank for their financial support. Mwananchi Cooperation Limited for advertising the conference to the extent that we ended up getting conference participants

not only from Tanzania but also from other countries within East Africa and outside East Africa as Well.

We would again like to extend our sincere gratitude to conference participants representing various institutions that attended the three-day conference and shared their ideas and thoughts. Their participation including sharing of experiences, practices and ideas as well as policy debates, helped the authors come up with more theoretically and empirically robust papers. As the conference went on, the challenges and opportunities in the Tanzanian education system in the era of globalisation became a reality. We firmly believe that the recommendations that we learn from the authors of these edited papers manage to talk to all educational stakeholders because of the very interactive nature of the conference participants.

Much of our gratitude should also go to the members of the parliament of Tanzania in general but specifically to the members of the parliamentary committee of social welfare issues including education who accepted our invitation and participated actively during the three days of the conference. These are policy planners who oversee educational matters in parliament. Given this, we believe that they will work on the conference recommendations now consolidated in this book so that the challenges that Tanzanians face in education are addressed. Equally so, we believe the opportunities that result from the south, south cooperation of nations together with globalisation are exploited to improve the quality of education in Tanzania.

This Book is unique in that it is about the education situation in Tanzania. It is not in any way supposed to evidence global north educational theories but realities of the Tanzanian situation within the East African context. For this reason, most authors discuss these issues within the context of the local political economy against the effects of globalisation. Because of this we firmly believe that the book will initiate a new kind of debate that is long overdue; a debate aimed at charting out appropriate strategies whose objective is to improve the quality of education in Tanzania so that it becomes a useful vehicle in enhancing processes of social change, transformation and development. We believe that no country can develop if its people are illiterate and ignorant.

## Preamble

Universities must be capable of providing education to guide all processes of social change and development in a positive direction in the countries in which they operate. Universities, as centres that generate knowledge to guide social practice, must be willing to openly share the knowledge produced with global citizenry and other active participants in development processes. Universities must be able to examine, analyse, and assess these processes of social change and development in order to determine whether they are positively changing the lives and circumstances of the people who are indeed supposed to be the ultimate beneficiaries. This assessment and analysis must not only occur in countries where universities are located but must be compared to other countries as well. While looking at internal processes of development is important, one must be cognizant of the fact that individual countries are currently connected to the cobweb of global development that affects them in various ways. For example, in the era of globalisation, it is extremely important to examine the winds of this process in terms of how they are sweeping the whole world and with what results. We all know that many studies on globalisation have shown how this process has ushered in both positive and negative development results. There is ample evidence of polarization of classes within countries.

As part of Aga Khan University, the Institute for Educational Development in East Africa believes strongly that an excellent university must adhere to the following three attributes: **First**, an excellent university must have effective teachers who excel at their roles. **Second**, it must excel in research and scholarship. **Third**, it must excel in community engagement. In order to make sure that these three attributes define us as an educational institution, the education that Aga



Khan University offers is guided by the following four core principles: **quality, access, relevance, and impact.**

This book explores and attempts to bear out some of the above core principles. It is a collection of papers that were presented at a national conference that was organised by AKU-IED-EA and held in Dodoma, the capital city of Tanzania, in November 2016. This conference was deliberately organised to address “Globalisation,” which is a relatively new concept and represents the pattern of social and economic development characterised by neo-liberal approaches to development policies that have dominated the world during the last three decades. There is no doubt that globalisation has increased economic opportunities and fostered rapid development of modern technology. On the other hand, there is no doubt that these economic and technological opportunities have not been equally and evenly distributed across countries, which has caused new challenges to emerge. Poverty and a situation of hopelessness loom large for many populations, leading to the birth of a new concept: the “**New Poor.**” Political instability and global terrorism have increased tremendously in the era of globalisation, and we all ask ourselves, “**Why Now?**” Globalisation has increased economic inequalities between countries and has generated polarisation of classes within countries. It has been beneficial to some, but it is at the same time detrimental to others. Of the many key aspects of growth in the developing world, people’s **health** and people’s **education** have been the most negatively affected; development of any society cannot happen if its population is unhealthy and ignorant.

AKU-IED-EA organised the Dodoma Conference in order to discuss the challenges that Tanzania was facing in the education sector during the era of globalisation. The conference attracted many participants, including Members of Parliament, leaders of various non-governmental organisations, policy planners, and other stakeholders who have a keen interest in education. The discussion centred not only on challenges in education brought by globalisation, but also new opportunities that have emerged due to globalisation. The papers in this book address these issues in detail. This book should be seen as an attempt by Aga Khan University to discuss this important issue in development with key stakeholders who are central to improving Tanzania’s quality of education. The conference, as well as the book, has to be seen as a model of good practice for universities in terms of sharing knowledge, experience, and practice with other stakeholders

who are not in the academy, and more so, with politicians as well as government policy planners.

AKU-IED-EA strongly believes that development can neither be donated nor imported. It is the people themselves in collaboration with other stakeholders, such as those listed above, that have to be active participants in these processes of social change and development. Universities as centres of generating and disseminating knowledge must refrain from being “Ivory Towers.” They must, instead, be grounded institutions that seek to provide education and knowledge that is relevant and impactful to societies they serve. I am sure readers will enjoy reading this book, and that all those dealing with education will find this volume a good resource in terms of understanding the positive and negative effects of globalisation in education. What is presented in this book will help us to know where we are, what we have done correctly and incorrectly, and where we should go from here. Examining these matters is important for us to be able to move forward and in the right direction.

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## INTRODUCTION

# Stakeholder Views for Government Consideration and Action

*J. Marriote Ngwaru*

### **Background to the Book**

Tanzania has on one hand continued to enjoy political peace and stability since independence in December 1961, but on the other hand, like its neighbours, has not escaped socio-economic challenges. In most cases the effect of these challenges has been to slow the pace of social change and development that the country aimed to achieve. Tanzania, however, is a country that has worked closely with its local and international development partners to find solutions to bring sustainable development and progress to its population through a range of initiatives. This book is a good example having seen Aga Khan University, Institute for Educational Development in East Africa (AKU IED EA) - an entity of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), a close development partner of the government – pursue an initiative to sensitise stakeholders to the pressing issues of education and the search for possible developmental solutions in the form of an educational conference from which the chapters in this book have been developed.

In order to address socio-economic challenges, the government has adopted many development policies, including but not limited to The

Arusha Declaration (1967)<sup>1</sup> that advocated for the policy of Socialism and Self-reliance, as indeed did others such as “Siasa ni Kilimo” (Politics is Agriculture, Education for Self-Reliance)<sup>2</sup> and other neo liberal policies associated with structural adjustment policies, economic liberalization and globalisation. At present, the country’s development direction is being guided by Vision 2025, which aims to achieve a high quality livelihood for its people. The attainment of Vision 2025 will depend largely on rapid socio-economic development based on several social and economic pillars including, most importantly, education.

Economic development is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, which brings into play a number of factors, including the provision of good quality education. This is the most crucial factor needed to assist Tanzania as it aims to realise the social and economic development objectives stipulated in Vision 2025, as well as the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is an undisputed truism that no nation can successfully develop while the majority of its population cannot access quality healthcare and education, and that is why it is always underlined that development can neither be donated nor imported. This is exactly why it is the citizens of a given country on their own (and possibly with the help of their development partners) that are the prime force of history and determiners of their own social change and development. They cannot be developed but, instead, can develop themselves by transforming their social lives and circumstances. One crucial development variable is indeed Education. People in any nation need to be able to access quality education if they are to become effective participants in the processes of social change. Quality education helps people to understand their challenges and to address them constructively through strategic action that stimulates and promotes development. Clearly, for Tanzania, the scope and quality of education remains the single most important prerequisite to the attainment of Vision 2025 and the 17 SDGs.

Education has remained a serious concern in Tanzania in the decades since independence, although several successful milestones have been achieved. The number of learners graduating from different levels of education has increased year-on-year, leading to the provision and attainment of Universal Primary Education in 1977. Subsequently,

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<sup>1</sup> TANU, Dar es Salaam. (1967). The Arusha Declaration and TANU’s Policy on Socialism and Self-Reliance. Dar es Salaam: Tanzania. Published by the Publicity Section, TANU, Dar es Salaam.

<sup>2</sup> TANU, Siasa ni Kilimo (The Iringa Declaration: Politics is Agriculture): CUT Press, Dar- es-Salaam, 1972.

between 2002 and 2006 the Government undertook the Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP 1) aiming at expanding enrolment, improving quality of education, capacity building and strengthening institutional management at the primary level. PEDP1 was immediately followed by PEDP II between 2007 and 2011 to address some of the challenges that were experienced during PEDP 1. In 2009 the first phase of the Secondary Education Development Programme (SEDEP I), focusing on improving access with equity, quality, management and delivery of secondary education, was concluded with many achievements. As with the PEDP, a subsequent stage - SEDEP II – was launched, focusing on universal secondary education. This also recorded substantial gains whereby the following was noted, for example, in 2011:

“We have come a long way...in 1961 we had about 3,238 primary schools, today there are 16,000. In 1961 we had 41 secondary schools with 11,832 students. Today we have 4,367 schools with 1,789,547 students. We had three teacher training colleges at the time of independence and today we have 103. These are great achievements” (Elizabeth Musokia, HakiElimu 2011, 6). (See HakiElimu, *Hali ya Elimu Tanzania*, 2012).

Moreover, in the 2014 education and training policy<sup>3</sup> the government of Tanzania acknowledged the importance of early years development and education by formalizing pre-schooling as a level in the education system. This builds on the 1995 education and training policy that had formalized pre-school education, but had not made it compulsory.

The education system continues to face many challenges, these successes notwithstanding. The system is hampered by a shortage of both teachers and teaching and learning materials, low teacher morale, overcrowded classrooms, inadequate per-capita grants, the intractable language of education policy, the overall curriculum design and lack of sensitivity to inclusion and equity among them. These challenges obviously frustrate the speed of the country's development.

These challenges, which are so prevalent, are the context of the education conference and the publishing of this book as part of the development effort towards their resolution. Through the book's individual papers and their combined thrust, therefore, these challenges are discussed in good faith and in the spirit of cooperation and collaboration guided by the belief that it is not the responsibility of the

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<sup>3</sup> Education Policy Tanzania (2014). *On the New Education Policy in Tanzania* (Sera Ya Elimu Na Mafunzo Tanzania (2014).

Government alone to see how these can be addressed. AKU IED EA has identified this as the responsibility of all well-meaning corporate bodies and citizens, and initiated the first conference of its type as its contribution to the effort.

Against this backdrop, the University publishes this book based on the National Conference “*Education Challenges and Opportunities in Tanzania in the Era of Globalisation*,” organised to canvas a cross section of stakeholder views on the challenges and possible strategies that can become the drivers of education policy and implementation plans into the future. This book is unique in its presentation of the views of as many education stakeholders in Tanzania as possible – from academics and non-governmental organisations, to policy makers and implementers. The cross-section of stakeholders that attended the conference and presented papers can refresh their memory and take stock as they plan their next steps by reading this book. Their diversity will ensure comprehensive input, coming as they do from a broad range of institutions whose work focuses on education. The stakeholders included, among others, are the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and Vocational Training, the President’s Office-Regional Administration and Local Government, NGOs whose work focuses on education, scholars from various educational institutions in Tanzania and the wider region and multilateral and bilateral development partners. Teachers and students, gender and equity specialists, as well as organisations that represent the interests of often-marginalised groups, such as the disabled in Tanzania, have had their views aired in the chapters of this book. Airing the voices of such a wide cross section of stakeholders for the benefit of policy makers and implementers in Tanzania is distinctly the purpose of this book and readers are welcome to follow the arguments and proposed ways forward.

## **The Thrust of the Arguments Presented**

The value of the papers that make up this book lies in the fact that they are united in their focus on the objectives, theme and sub-themes of the conference while drawing on specialisations that remain as different as their authors and their backgrounds. They all problematize the question of ‘Quality Education Development for Social and Economic Transformation’ and attempt to zoom in on the mitigation of challenges and enhancement of opportunities. For the purposes of education policy makers and implementers, the papers sought to:

- Identify key education challenges in Tanzania and how to address them.
- Identify strengths and opportunities to be enhanced and raise the quality of education in the era of globalisation.
- Identify cross-disciplinary models and approaches to education and development.
- Identify approaches to meeting the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, and
- Establish the state, challenges, and possible direction for appropriate reforms.

The papers address a range of specific topics in line with the conference sub-themes below.

1. The role of public and private sectors in education.
2. The role of the corporate multilateral agencies in education.
3. Inclusion and equity in education: a critical dimension to economic development.
  - a) The role of inclusive education in development – gender equality and equity.
4. The role of early years development and education in sustainable national economic growth.
5. The role of information and communication technology and modern technology in teaching and learning.
6. Education and development in the East African Community
  - a) Educational harmony in the East African Community
7. The role of higher education and research
  - a) Research-informed policy and decision making
  - b) Capacity in higher education and research

## **A Selection of Key Messages from the Book**

The book has used eighteen different papers with a variety of orientations and backgrounds to identify and explore education challenges and seeks possible ways to address them through reflection and advocacy. As the conference itself was doing, the book looks at consistent ways of strengthening the education system in the unique socio-cultural context of Tanzania. This section highlights the messages of selected papers to give a taste of the full papers.

The *Strengthening Education Systems in East Africa* paper written by J. Marriote Ngwaru (PhD, Associate Professor at AKU IED EA) captures the problem at a regional scale to contextualise the challenges

faced by education systems in global East Africa. The research study leading to this paper was supported by Global Affairs Canada under the project Strengthening Education Systems in East Africa (SESEA). The centrality of this paper lies in its search for a universal definition of education systems that brings out not only key attributes of education systems but also the main considerations required if education systems are to be strengthened systematically and consistently. This paper speaks to the sub theme: Education and Development in the East African Community, and the key message is the need for educational stakeholders to understand the meaning and significance of education systems in order to be consistent in their management and approaches.

Defined as a complex multi-faceted outfit that creates a culture through the way its facets interact, it is revealed that each education system is best handled within its context and management system. This is why the paper calls on stakeholders to understand that each system is unique and identifiable by a set of shared beliefs, understandings, practices, and taken-for-granted notions that shape the everyday activities and actors. The World Bank's view is that a system can be said to involve governance and financial management, including incentive mechanisms, and the paper highlights the lack of a direct relationship between financial inputs and participation in the educational system on one hand, and outputs on the other. In this context, it briefly examines the major barriers and constraints that inhibit a clear relationship between inputs and outputs, arriving at conclusions that invite research-based recommendations that governments can use to navigate possible solutions.

Following this paper, the book tackles a variety of topics according to the sub-themes above. To highlight this variety another five papers are highlighted to give readers the insight they need to explore further.

The next paper summarized here: *Fursa kwa Watoto 'Opportunities for Children'*, is important as much for its unique message as for the fact that the authors of Children in Crossfire are implementers of a project with the same name, Opportunities for Children. Specifically, the report on a four-year multi-stakeholder<sup>4</sup> educational research initiative in Tanzania aims to improve 'school readiness' and learning outcomes for

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<sup>4</sup> Implementers: Children in Crossfire, United Nations Children's Fund, Aga Khan University, Maarifani Ufunguo, Tanzania Home Economics Association in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Vocational Training and schools in the Mwanza and Kilimanjaro regions; M&E support: Mathematica and Corporate Social Responsibility; Donor: Dubai Cares.



children, building evidence towards what effective and scalable quality pre-primary education entails. It details how the research aims to support the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania to achieve the vision and goals of the Education and Training Policy 2014 to build a citizenry that is educated, knowledgeable, skilled and proficient to contribute to national development. Researchers have found that developing countries that invest in early childhood development and increase pre-school enrolment by 50% can realise up to a 17-fold return on that investment<sup>5</sup>. The SDGs have acknowledged this, with Goal 4, Target 4.2 stating that, “by 2030 ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education”.

Another paper highlighting the variety and reach of the themes in this book is *Industrialisation and Economic Development in Tanzania: Exploring the Role of Evidence-Based Public Policy Making in Education Policy* by academic Dr. Catherine Gerald Mkude of the Open University of Tanzania: Department of Information and Communication Technology. Her paper outlines major issues in public policy making as it explores evidence-based public policy making and its importance in making policy choices in Tanzania. The paper explores the role of evidence-based public policy making in education policy along the key stages of public policy making, drawing conclusions from different international empirical studies to provide recommendations for public policy making in Tanzania. It uses the policy of waiving education fees as the main research example and otherwise engages in an appropriately deep yet concise literature review.

The depth and breadth of topics, themes and authors are further demonstrated by the following paper collaboration between AKU IED and University of British Columbia, Canada on an innovation that was introduced to low-resource schools in Tanzania as the way forward. Significantly, this project was supported by Global Affairs Canada under the SESEA project. *Making the Link: Integrating Design Thinking, Making and STEMx in Education* by Dr Wachira Nicholas of Aga Khan University, Institute for Educational Development East Africa and Dr Susan Crichton of University of British Columbia, Canada concentrates on how, globally, educators are embracing *Making* as both a pedagogical approach and an area of study, outlining how

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<sup>5</sup> The Lancet Child Development Reports (Sept 23rd 2011). Paper 2: “Strategies for reducing inequalities and improving developmental outcomes for young children in low-income and middle income countries.”

*Making* requires students to physically design and build, allowing them to take abstract concepts and make personal, tangible meaning using design tools and materials in the context of collaborative discussion. Read and find out how *making* encourages student-centred, active learning and develops resilience, curiosity, and self-empowerment through wrestling with ideas, engaging in problem solving and *finding*. Consistent with the overall aim of the book of seeking solutions to Tanzania's educational challenges, it is grounded in the rural and low resource contexts where teachers typically lack access to quality professional development, resources and opportunities to experience pedagogical innovations. The paper proposes an approach, *Taking Making into Schools*, that disrupts existing teaching practice by integrating subject areas such as Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and human-centred Design (STEMx).

The last paper to give a flavour is related but different: *Students' Characteristics and Their Engagement in Blended E-learning Environments in Tanzanian Universities* by Haruni Machumu of the Department of Education, Mzumbe University and Prof. Chang Zhucan demonstrates the diversity of views and concerns. The two authors currently work in the Department of Educational Sciences, Vrije Universiteit Brussels, Belgium. Read this book and find out how this paper discusses the ever-evolving digital technologies changing education practices in the modern era and how a great deal of time and resources have been put into developing, designing, deploying and implementing newly innovated educational technologies enhancing learning environments. Find out how in the modern age of globalisation, learning environments assume the role of time (instead of place) and process (instead of transfer of knowledge). Read on!

## Conclusion

AKU IED EA has embarked on this stakeholder conference hosting and book publication as an important pathway to stimulate reflection on challenges in our countries that can be mitigated to pave the way for development innovations. The publishing of books and the subsequent access the University will ensure for stakeholder, underlines the commitment to joint public and private partnership in the important task of enhancing development through a variety of approaches. And therefore, now, welcome to the book and read about Education Challenges and Opportunities in Tanzania During The Era of Globalisation.

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## CHAPTER 1

# Strengthening Education Systems in East Africa: The Need for Actors, Structures and Processes Pulling Together

*J. Marriote Ngwaru (PhD)*

### **Abstract**

The nature of the actors, structures and processes involved in an education system mean it can be described as a complex multi-faceted outfit that creates a culture through the facets' interaction. This finally makes each system unique and identifiable by a set of shared beliefs, understandings, practices, and taken-for-granted notions that shape the everyday activities and actors. The minimum set of elements that define a functional education system deliver schooling that consists in three key aspects that make them a 'system': a shared purpose, a relatively stable/predictable set of interactions between its actors and, more broadly, a shared culture as defined above. The term describes the whole schooling establishment and curriculum of a country from pre-school through to high school – everything that goes into educating school students (public or private) at all levels. Trying to tie these down to a minimum, the World Bank's view is that this can be said to involve governance and financial management including incentive mechanisms. However, there still does not appear to be a direct relationship between financial inputs and participation in the educational system on one hand, and

outputs on the other. This paper briefly examines the major barriers and constraints that inhibited a clear relationship between inputs and outputs. A review of literature constituted the larger segment of data and this was complemented by fieldwork. Results showed that the multi-faceted nature of education systems contributed more to the difficulties encountered in most contexts, suggesting the need to isolate specific nodes to target for the improvement of educational outputs.

**Key words:** *education, system strengthening, inputs and outputs, major barriers and constraints, sustainable schooling, system-wise approaches*

## Introduction and Acknowledgements

This paper is a product of a study carried out under Strengthening Education Systems in East Africa (SESEA), a five-year project being implemented by the Aga Khan Foundation Canada (AKFC), together with the specialised Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) agencies<sup>6</sup> in East Africa. The broader SESEA project was designed to strengthen teacher education and support systems to improve and sustain learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy for girls and boys in pre-primary and primary school levels in the target areas of the Coastal Region of Kenya, including Kwale, Kilifi and Mombasa counties and Uganda's West Nile Region in the Koboko, Yumbe and Arua districts together with Tanzania's southern districts, including Lindi Rural, Nachingwea and Kilwa. The study had a number of objectives including:

- Suggesting, for use within SESEA, an operational definition of "education system" and showing how it might be applied in East Africa
- Pointing out the major barriers and constraints to system level engagement and possible pathways to overcoming them
- Articulating a code (minimum set) of elements that defined a functional<sup>7</sup> education system
- Identifying ways in which SESEA implementing partners could strengthen one or more elements of a functional education system
- Recommending how SESEA could be (re) positioned in order to better integrate all the elements of success above, and

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<sup>6</sup> The participating AKDN agencies include: Aga Khan Foundation East Africa, Aga Khan University- Institute for Educational Development East Africa, Aga Khan Academies, and Aga Khan Educational Services.

<sup>7</sup> Functional here means a system producing the quality and quantity of learning outcomes defined in the national goals.

- Suggesting a set of key milestones (3-4 indicators) for measuring improvements in the education systems.

Insights were generated from a literature review together with corroboration from fieldwork. This paper is not a report of the detailed study but intends to highlight key issues related to the objectives above. In the context of low budgetary allocations by the concerned governments for social services such as education, the strengthening of existing education systems was made more intricate as donor interventions mainly became the available lifeline. It is in this context that understanding the way education systems were constituted

## **Literature Review**

The commissioning of this study was occasioned by the need for the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) of SESEA to establish deeper and clearer understandings about how education systems could be strengthened in the region. This was more so in the context where evidence showed an uncertain relationship between educational inputs, including financial resource injection, interest, participation, and interventions on the one hand, and outputs on the other. As an intervention project intending to continue strengthening education systems, SESEA needed this clarity. For the study, the starting point needed to be an examination of the nature of what was understood as “education system” because an unreliable appreciation of this central concept would lead to presumptions about what could be achieved.

## **Education systems**

The education system is what has been described earlier as a complex multi-faceted array of actors, structures and processes that create a culture through their interaction. It is for this reason that there are many definitions and perspectives of the concept, including: ‘the entirety of the educational support network for schools’ (Hopkins 2016, p.138); the culture it creates – that is, a set of shared beliefs, understandings, practices, and taken-for-granted notions that shape the everyday activities of system actors (Rincon-Gallardo, 2016b); and ‘what turns education policy and strategy into education outcomes’ (Verspoor, 1989: 74). In general, components include the school, teacher training, curriculum development, assessment systems, monitoring systems, financial management systems and overall policy direction. The minimum set of elements that define functional education systems deliver schooling in three key aspects that make them a ‘system’: a shared

purpose, a relatively stable/predictable set of interactions between its actors and, more broadly, a shared culture as defined above. In this light, the term has been taken to constitute the whole schooling establishment and curriculum of a country from pre-school through to high school – everything that goes into educating school students (public or private) at all levels. The World Bank's (2010) view is that this involves governance, management, and financing rules including incentive mechanisms.

Watson, N., DiCecco, R., Roher, E., Rosenbluth, E. K., & Wolfish, A. (2003) say educational governance can be said to refer to authority and decision making within the system. This would include but not necessarily be limited to: how the education system is organised and power is allocated; what structures and decision-making processes are in place; formal roles and responsibilities; and the relationship between central and local authorities. UNESCO (2009) Global Monitoring Report<sup>8</sup> demonstrates that governance is a critical factor in creating enabling conditions for quality learning and overcoming inequalities in education. At the system level, governance determines what or which education policies and priorities will be put in place; how much funding will be available to education and how these resources will be distributed, used, managed and accounted for. The powers and functions of governing education are determined at this level and distributed across the different layers and between the actors within the system. The rule of law and transparency are maintained so that those who hold powers are accountable for their performance. Taken together, this is why Valentini (2014: 1) says, “the education system is what turns education policy and strategy into education outcomes”. When governance fails to create enabling conditions for quality learning and to overcome inequalities in education, we can see what we call barriers emerging to obstruct the delivery of quality education in the form of unsuitable conditions, ineffective teacher methodologies and unhelpful school cultures! To avoid this, there is a need for strong linkages among the different components based on a common vision.

Comparing education system reform in four countries, Scott & Davis (2016) refer to a system broadly as “a large number of entities that have a common purpose”. This operational definition of an education system is intentionally open-ended. As argued by Bennett (2016) it is not possible to tie down the exact definition of ‘education system’, as it is

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<sup>8</sup> UNESCO (2009).EFA global monitoring report 2010: Reaching and teaching the most marginalised. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

a sensitizing concept<sup>9</sup> rather than definitive concept. Bennett adds that it is capable of reinvention in different contexts and in different times. The onus, therefore, on people working in a particular context is to be aware of the larger picture within their “system” and to be responsive to local needs and what works given local norms and culture. Hopkins (2016: 138) makes a similar point, noting that diverse nations, states and communities have, over time, developed very different systems for providing education for their children. This is why both the description of educational systems and the necessary levers for ‘systemic reform’ will vary greatly by national ‘systemic’ contexts. For purposes of this study and paper, these were important variables that even put paid to some of the objectives such as articulating a code (minimum set) of elements that define a functional<sup>10</sup> education system. By the nature of this “intentionally open-ended array of actors, structures and processes” that is more of “a sensitizing concept rather than definitive one”, it was not possible to categorically isolate what might be seen as the weak components to be corrected, ruling out any silver bullet to education strengthening.

### Inputs versus outputs

This is the one apparently intriguing phenomenon that prompted this study of factors that contributed to education systems’ strengthening; factors required clear appreciation by all stakeholders. The question is about why it appears that efforts to strengthen systems do not yield any sustainable results. For example, the United Nations Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report (2011) shows that education spending as a share of gross domestic product had increased from 2.9 per cent in 1999 to 3.8 per cent in 2008 in low-income countries. But against this background of increased interest and activity with more participation in education and more money being spent, the differences in the outputs remained unclear. Whilst there was some evidence of improvement, as cited by the United Nations report on the progress made towards the Millennium Development Goals (2015)<sup>11</sup>, such as an increase in the literacy rate amongst 15 to 24 year olds from

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<sup>9</sup> A sensitizing concept (a term originally used in the qualitative research field), with reference to an educational system, is a concept that is not definitive but gives a general sense of direction and reference that will inform the design of an educational system but does not prescribe the elements which should reflect the socio-economic context of that system.

<sup>10</sup> Functional here means a system producing the quality and quantity of learning outcomes defined in the national goals.

<sup>11</sup> The Millennium Development Goals Report (2015) United Nations Programme.



2000 to 2015 of 8 per cent, from 83 per cent to 91 per cent, it remained apparent that children were not accessing sustainable schooling. The EFA Global Monitoring Report of 2013/14 said that in Sub-Saharan Africa many children were (still) not learning the basic skills, since only 23 per cent of poor girls in rural areas were completing primary education. It was underscored that while the richest boys would achieve universal primary completion in 2021, the poorest girls, on current trajectories, would astoundingly not catch up until 2086! In low income countries only 37 per cent of the adolescents would complete lower secondary education and the rate is as low as 14 per cent for the poorest. Again, girls from the poorest families in Sub-Saharan Africa were only expected to achieve universal lower secondary completion in 2111 – close to another 100 years! This underlined the little progress made since 2008 when UNESCO said that the challenges of low literacy rates were widely recognised to be greatest in Sub-Saharan Africa and further asserted that the region had the highest proportion of out-of-school children, the greatest gender disparities, the highest ratio of pupils to teachers and the lowest primary completion rates. This reflects the situation in the SESEA study regions where considerable effort has been and continues to be made to get boys and girls to school and to improve their schooling experience.

Donor funds are the lifeline for most efforts to strengthen education systems, but often donor agencies' action plans on the ground reflect priorities that might not necessarily help the cause of systems strengthening. One trend that has been found is where intervention projects were organised on a piecemeal basis, without any regard for national or international priorities, nor for any other intervention projects happening (e.g. Foresti et al., 2013). This call to consider educational systems as a whole, rather than on a piecemeal basis, is not new. A review of 21 educational change programmes supported by 42 World Bank assisted projects (Verspoor, 1989) found that the projects deemed to be successful engaged with a wide range of objectives, whereas projects aiming only at, for example, curriculum change, in isolation, without considering the wider context, were not ultimately successful at achieving long term change. Similarly, a 1996 report for the World Bank (Heneveld & Craig, 1996) bemoaned the lack of consideration of output rather than input measures and process factors, with projects often operating without a clear sense of what the eventual outcome should be. More recently, albeit 10 years ago, two major inter-governmental meetings led to the Paris Declaration (2005) and the

Accra Declaration of 2008 (OECD, 2008)<sup>12</sup> which emphasised the need for joined-up thinking in a number of respects characterised particularly by developing countries taking control of their development agendas, donor agencies working together more effectively, and for there to be greater accountability.

## **Findings from the Systems Strengthening Study**

### **The study**

The results reported here are part of a study that was commissioned by the Project Co-ordination Unit (PCU) of SESEA to provide a critical analysis of the concept 'educational system'. The main source of information was a literature review; however, it was complemented by fieldwork data from three East African countries where the study was being implemented. As indicated, the focus was to provide clarity on how education systems could be effective, how stakeholders could work with educational systems in their totality rather than piecemeal; that is, how they could address issues specific to systems components for holistic improvements. The goal was to put together comprehensive literature on the topic that could inform work within the SESEA project for sustainability. For example, it could explain the current situation where clearly there were significant inputs into education in the developing world on one hand but few clear measureable outputs identified on the other hand. Why was it like that? Three researchers, two members of faculty from AKU IED EA and one external consultant from University of Toronto, embarked on the literature review while fieldwork was carried out by AKU alone accordingly.

### **Findings**

The key issues that were addressed in this study for their pertinence to strengthening education systems included the following:

- Definition of education systems
- Minimum set of elements that defined functional education systems
- Why focus on systems strengthening
- Barriers to systemic improvements
- Towards systemic working to strengthen education systems
- Key features of working systematically
- Measuring improvements in educational systems

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<sup>12</sup> OECD The Paris Declaration of Aid Effectiveness (2005); Accra Agenda for Action (2008).

### *Education systems: definition*

As indicated earlier, literature abundantly indicates that many definitions of ‘educational system’ are available that show it is not a unitary system. Significant among them are those that address ‘the entirety of the educational support network for schools’ (Hopkins 2016, p. 138); ‘what turns education policy and strategy into education outcomes’ (Verspoor 1989, p. 74); and a system involving governance, management, financing rules including incentive mechanisms (World Bank, 2010). Weick (1976) says it is like a loosely coupled organisation where the different units operate and carry on quite independently of one another with little overt coherence between them. The system has also been broadly referred to as “a large number of (educational) entities that have a common purpose” (Scott & Davis, 2016) and is intentionally open-ended. Bennett (2016) says it is not possible to tie down the exact definition, further arguing that the ‘education system’ was more a sensitizing concept rather than a definitive one and was capable of reinvention in different contexts and in different times. In one sense, components identified included the school, teacher training, curriculum development, assessment systems, monitoring systems, financial management systems and overall policy direction. Rincon-Gallardo (2016a) simply says it incorporates different functional components in the form of the various dimensions of education policy; services and supervision such as curriculum and curriculum development; finances; human resources including certification, allocation, professional training and development. It again includes supervision of schools and education personnel; special education services and community relations. The exact array, configuration and functions of these components are known to vary for different national education system contexts, and there is no consensus on the most effective structure of organisation. Now I turn to examining the minimum set of elements that could be used to make education systems functional.

### *Minimum set of elements that define functional education systems*

Given the nature and character of an education system – a complex multi-faceted array of actors, structures and processes that create a culture through their interaction – coming up with what could be called a minimum set of elements is ordinarily elusive. Even when a shared purpose, resources (financial, human, material), a relatively stable/ predictable set of interactions between actors and, more

broadly, a shared culture, exist, their interaction patterns again still remain very context-specific and illusive. The main reason is that key stakeholders often differ according to specific contexts, for example in centralised and decentralised systems. In the context of the three countries in question the semi or quasi-decentralised systems always made this minimum set of elements illusive. For example, in Kenya the Teacher Service Commission and Ministry of Education are responsible for the education system, while in Tanzania, the Department of Regional Affairs and Regional and Local Government in the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Education Science and Technology is. In Uganda on the other hand, the District and Municipal Responsible Authorities and Ministry of Education and Sports and culture are responsible. Notably, in all cases the Ministry was in charge of policy and financial control and the quasi-decentralised organs were responsible for implementation. It was obviously not possible to guarantee shared purpose and/or a shared culture. It was no wonder that at lower administrative levels, including teachers, few if any bothered to know the structure of the system in which they operated. This was not helpful, especially because strong linkages among the different components is crucial, based on a common vision, a sense of shared responsibility and ownership. It was again not sustainable because a high level of trust between stakeholders was central to the success of a system. It is now important to turn to strengthening the systems.

### **Why focus on systems strengthening**

It has already been noted that increasing educational inputs – sums of money paid to schools and the amount of time spent and the number of children attending schools – is not in itself enough to secure clear, sustainable improvements to education. This is partly because education is a complex, long-term enterprise that involves multiple stakeholders both directly and indirectly. To use an example given by a World Bank report (2010), in addition to the existence of a school for children to attend, children need to be healthy enough to do so, the infrastructure (e.g. a bridge where necessary) needs to be in place in order that children can get to school, and parents need to be supporting their children to stay in school for prolonged periods of time, as opposed to helping with household chores, working on the land, and so on. This line of thought can be extended considerably further.

In addition, the child needs a well-trained, well-motivated teacher, with good pre-service and in-service training opportunities who feels supported in what s/he is trying to do by the school leadership and inspection services. There needs to be a curriculum which is well thought out in terms of children's developmental needs and appropriate for the local, national and global arena, including supporting materials and an assessment system which supports the curriculum and the approach. The school needs to be well equipped both in terms of educational materials, as well as being able to provide food and sanitation. And, at the end of the schooling process there needs to be availability of jobs to make meaningful use of the education provided and contribute to national development.

### *Barriers to systemic improvements*

Whilst, as noted above, the call for systemic thinking in educational development goes back at least 25 years, there continues to be a discourse around development projects being delivered on a piecemeal basis. Foresti et al. (2013) say very much the same as Verspoor (1989) cited above, stating that there is a tendency to focus on macro policy rather than delivery issues. The example given was the production of teaching learning materials where designing, printing and distributing textbooks was done without associated teacher training or supervision of their use, with planning rarely considering the implications for their goals on other aspects of the system (Gottelmann-Duret & Bahr, 2012). A wide variety of reasons for this persistence in piecemeal thinking can be found in the literature, including the following:

### *Prioritizing inputs over outputs*

Inputs would include, as noted above, spending on education, the number of children actually in school and the buildings in the school. Outputs particularly would include quality of learning (Valentini, 2014) but would also include progression to employment appropriate to education levels. A closely related point is that there can be a concentration on things which can be seen to be done rather than more intractable problems, e.g. teacher absenteeism (Valentini, 2014). Therefore, as indicated in the introduction, problems can arise if inputs are considered without considering outputs – the former can be fixed on a piecemeal basis but the latter cannot.

*Implementers not knowing the context*

Because implementers might not know the context (Verspoor, 1989: 162) they will attempt to impose a solution on one situation which worked in another (Valentini, 2014), again without a sense of overall systemic thinking. Farrell (2000: 87) also picked up on this point, stating that, “changes which generally happen at last are local and locally adapted, developed and implemented by individual teachers or small local groups of teachers, drawing upon their own “personal practical knowledge.” They take account of their constantly-evolving knowledge of their students and the communities in which they live and that they deem informed as they find appropriate (selectively and sceptically) by ideas from assorted outside gurus, experts, and authoritative figures.”

*Time scale for projects too short*

For benefits or otherwise of educational projects to be seen, considerable time periods need to be allowed. So, for example, to see the results of an early childhood initiative in an employment context, one would need to wait something like 20 years. This is a point raised by Farrell (2000), who suggests that short timescales can often be a reason for projects not becoming embedded. Essentially this reminds us to give long time spans for our projects or to expect to monitor and if possible continue to support the outcomes of our projects beyond the funded period. Such activities should be budgeted for, possibly by national governments or other grants.

*Funders working to their own agenda*

This is very common because often funders have their own timelines according to the time and level of funding they will be having. They may work to their own agenda with a narrow set of aims, and problems may be compounded if there are conflicts between funding partners in larger projects (Birmingham, 2011). As much as possible, therefore, funders must understand the real needs of their beneficiaries in the targeted context of the intended project. If possible, establishing baseline understanding will be desirable before interventions even if it might mean rolling out the real intervention in a different study.

*Towards systemic working to strengthen education systems*

Much has been written about theories of change (e.g. Vogel & Stephenson, 2012), with funding agencies often required to state an

explicit statement of theories of change along with the relationship with the logical framework. A key feature of systems is that they incorporate different components, making the connections between them extremely important as they look to work together as a coherent whole. A key concept in educational systems is the idea of different parts of the system linking up meaningfully. Johnson and Chrispeels (2010) report that if initiatives do not get adequately communicated from partnering bodies, it can cause problems at the 'grass roots'. Linkages within systems take many different forms. Capper et al. (2002: 180) gave instances of attempts to engage teachers in more child-centred activities resulting in practices that were 'limited and often shallow'. The point being made here is the importance of a systems level engagement to these initiatives; that they should never be approached piecemeal. For example, before attempts to engage teachers in more child-centred activities, the chain must be traced to see what else is related to that practice and fix all related pieces in that chain for effectiveness.

### *Key features of working systemically*

#### *Good planning of reforms and services*

Perhaps not surprisingly, an issue which comes through repeatedly is the need for good planning of reforms and services (e.g. Gottelmann-Duret & Bahr 2012; Valentini 2014; Verspoor 1989). One key organisation is the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) which, since its formation in 1962, has been working with Ministries of Education to assist them in strengthening their capacity to manage their education systems (see, for example, IIEP, 2010). Verspoor (1989) also highlights the need for experienced and skilled planners in implementing change. This is an important area of focus for successful systems level interface. Specialist Organisations like AKU IED EA should always build capacity among their recipients to ensure that they absorb the innovations and avoid experiences similar to the Ministry of Education and the World Bank grant above.

#### *Consensus amongst stakeholders*

Aligned to the point above about linkages within systems, Wales et al. (2014), in looking at Chile as a case study of a country which has made huge strides in education over the last 30 years, emphasised the need for consensus amongst the stakeholders in ensuring a common vision for what is needed, resulting in coherent and effective planning and implementation. Similarly, Gottelman-Duret & Bahr (2012) emphasise

the need for effective interaction between the different stakeholders to identify and respond to the need for development in education. Particularly, work is needed to ensure that all stakeholders understand the purpose of the intervention in question and its underlying rationale; therefore, for example, attending training workshops should first and foremost be to engage with the content rather than for any financial reason to be present<sup>13</sup>. As an educational organisation, we should aim for, and ensure solid foundations for all our interventions for sustainability, rather than piecemeal approaches hoping for immediate outcomes.

### *Accountability systems*

The need for good information, monitoring, setting bench marks and accountability comes through in a number of texts dealing with strengthening systems (Gottelmann-Duret & Bahr, 2012; Valentini, 2014; Wales et al., 2014). This is self-explanatory and in the context of low-resource environments is an endemic challenge. Low-resource environments generally breed what might be characterised as greed and mean organisations such as AKDN and AKU IED EA have to deal with this systematically. Usually systems are in place but are breached routinely. Financial accountability might have to be one of the areas to be considered as integral to education.

### *Range of complementary interventions*

The need to have a broad range of interventions is emphasised, for example, in Wales et al. (2014), including investment in learning materials, reforming the curriculum and longer school days. AKU IED EA takes this consideration seriously. Workshops, material development and follow-up support have now been built into most of their projects as is well illustrated in the development of literacy story books after the 'Parent-teacher empowerment for literacy development' study by Ngwaru and Oluga (2012). These should not be considered as additional but integral and therefore receive emphasis and adequate funding.

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<sup>13</sup> Trainers working in the field provide considerable anecdotal evidence that a large amount of time is spent discussing expenses and allowances rather than actually engaging with the content to hand. Hard evidence of this is more difficult to find. In a Nigerian context, a journal article by Smith (2003) engages with a related point, expressing concern that positions in projects bringing money and status are often given to family and friends of influential people rather than the best people for the job.



### *Incentives for teachers*

Whilst recognising the potentially divisive effects of paying some teachers more than others for good performance, Kingdon et al. (2014) and Wales et al. (2014) found that on balance the effect was morale boosting, leading to improvements in students' learning. Kingdon et al. (2014) further make the claim that trade union involvement has the effect of increasing costs and reducing student performance. Whilst a full consideration of this important point is beyond the scope of this paper, one might well consider that trade unions have done a huge amount of good in establishing the importance of employees' rights across the world, but when allowed untrammelled powers can end up doing exactly the kind of harm being referred to here.

### *Measuring improvements in educational systems*

It is not reasonably possible to derive an explicit set of universally acceptable indicators of education system quality and improvement beyond the kinds of indicators already used nationally in the countries served by SESEA and internationally by organisations such as UNESCO, the World Bank and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). This section will however highlight some key available indicators related to education system goals and quality in the countries where SESEA is operating.

### *National assessment indicators*

The selection of indicators for system improvement should include, but not be limited to, evidence from the results of national assessment activities in place in the countries served. Generally, assessment indicators are the primary reference point to ascertain how well the system, individual schools, and perhaps different groups of students are faring in terms of access, completion and student learning performance, in the areas assessed. For example, student results in reading, writing and mathematics in the Kenya Primary School Examinations are the major source of information for local educators to evaluate the quality of their schools. This is why any improvement initiatives must be able to demonstrate an influence on those results if those initiatives hope to gain political and professional support for sustainability and scaling up. There may be valid criticisms of the quality of these national assessments but the assessment instruments and processes themselves can become a focus of improvement efforts. That said, the results and conventional uses of those assessments should not be ignored as one

necessary dimension and set of indicators for education system quality and improvement.

### *International comparative data*

In the international arena, most high performing education systems make use of comparative measures of education quality and improvement in addition to their internal indicators and measures. It is not obvious what comparative indicators of education quality and improvement the SESEA countries and SESEA could draw upon for monitoring system improvement. Certainly, the databases created by UNESCO for its Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Reports and used by the World Bank and by organisations like the GPE for their own comparative reports on education quality worldwide are a key source. Data from Kenya and Uganda appear in all these reports; data from Tanzania appear in some (e.g., GPE reports) but not others (e.g., GEM reports). These monitoring systems and reports include, but are not limited to, indicators of student access, completion, school readiness and learning, as well as useful comparative indicators and data on aspects of the system such as education financing, teacher credentials and distribution, and the quality of educational plans. Data on student learning and achievement in reading and mathematics at the primary school level in the UNESCO Inequality Data Base for the East African countries, for example, are derived from country level and regional literacy and numeracy assessments conducted by powerful civil society organisation Uwezo. This is a Kiswahili word for capacity and is independent of the national assessment programs sponsored by the formal education system.

### *Local indicators*

In East Africa, local school personnel often look to and rely on 'mean scores' in national assessments of reading, writing and mathematics as evidence of student learning and school quality. Mean scores are aggregate measures and indicators of overall student performance. They have a place in discussions of education quality, but provide little information to inform or guide improvements in student learning at the local level.

### *Longitudinal data*

There is a compelling need for longitudinal data that can be used to identify and track change and improvement over time. Improvement is a process that is susceptible to fluctuations from year to year due to

a wide variety of factors, among them: student mobility and changes in student characteristics in schools, teacher turnover, significant changes in assessment instruments, political change, security issues and conflict. The only way to credibly monitor system improvement at whatever level – national, regional, county, school – is with comparable longitudinal data. Longitudinal data, combined with data disaggregated by student sub-groups, gives a more accurate picture of improvements or lack thereof, across and within an educational system.

One of the issues for SESEA and similar education improvement initiatives is that the kinds of data and indicators, especially comparative data, may not be readily accessible at the sub-national levels at which these improvement initiatives operate. National indicators of student performance and other measures of education system quality, for example, would be of little use for assessing system improvement in one county except as comparison data for similar assessments at the county level.

It is within this context that one can conclude this discussion with a thoughtful and provocative challenge to shift orientation from a concern with evidence-based practice to a concern for practice-based evidence (Bryk 2015). The argument places the emphasis and onus on education practitioners and policy makers to inquire and reflect upon the effects of specific programs and practices that are being implemented, rather than simply gathering outcome data in response to external accountability demands and speculating as to how those outcomes might be attributed.

## **Fieldwork**

Fieldwork was undertaken to throw direct light on the nature of education systems from the perspective of stakeholders within the SESEA region projects. Literature noted various key points about the connectivity required between components of systems and the trust needed between stakeholders. The fieldwork then, on the other hand, set out, in part, to investigate whether that understanding and trust existed and even whether stakeholders had an awareness of the systems in which they operated.

## **Data collection**

A total of 70 questionnaires were filled out with the breakdown detailed below: 15 senior respondents were interviewed, 3 in Tanzania, 6 in Uganda and 6 in Kenya.

**Table 1.1: Breakdown of Questionnaire Respondents by Country and Job Title**

| Designation of questionnaire respondent | Kenya     | Tanzania  | Uganda    | Total     |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| County and sub-county officials         | 3         | 3         | 12        | 18        |
| Head and deputy head teachers           | 2         | 4         | 2         | 8         |
| College tutors                          | 1         | 4         | 0         | 5         |
| Primary school teachers                 | 8         | 18        | 10        | 36        |
| Others                                  | 3         | 0         | 0         | 3         |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>17</b> | <b>29</b> | <b>24</b> | <b>70</b> |

### Summary of fieldwork findings

This segment indicated a number of issues regarding understandings and perceptions of the educational systems in which participants worked, including:

- Considerable lack of understanding and misunderstanding on the part of the participants regarding the educational systems
- Mistrust between different parts of educational systems, with teachers regarding education officers and officials with a level of suspicion; which was evident in the literature review
- Confusion as to who exactly had responsibility or what they were responsible for in different aspects of implementation and policy could be seen across the region:
  - In Tanzania between MoEVT and the Regional and Local Government Office
  - In Kenya between the Ministry and the Teachers Service Commission, and
  - In Uganda between the different levels of the decentralised administration

These findings, put alongside key points, which emerge from the literature review, indicated that there was still considerable work to be done to ensure fully functioning and effective educational systems in the SESEA regions. In the following concluding section there are some thoughts about how a continuation of the SESEA project might work to bring about improvements in these crucial areas.

## **Brief Conclusions and Recommendations**

This paper problematized the concepts of systemic or system-wide change and large-scale change with reference to education systems in East Africa to inform projects such as SESEA. It looked at how best multilateral organisations such as AKU IED EA, through such projects such as SESEA, could be positioned to effectively strengthen the systems in the countries where they were operating. The findings in the context of the scope of this paper are that SESEA should continue to focus on how efficiently and effectively the existing systems can be made to work together with the possibility of eventually effecting actual system change. Against the challenges outlined in the relevant sections above, it is possible to hope to influence change as long as the key project stages are followed through. Important project stages are the initial sensitization of policy makers and implementers and the final learning and dialogue stage where stakeholders takeover the implementation of innovations. As currently set up, SESEA is looking to strengthen the systems as they are, rather than make changes to the systems, and this can still lead to systems change if the scale was expanded. While it might appear to be necessary to be working at national level and not just in regions of countries, input at policy level drawing upon evidence and experiences from projects implemented at more local levels can also be made through learning and dialogue. One of the recommendations is that there is a strong argument for the intervention agencies to involve critical government agencies at policy level as much as possible, whenever it is feasible. This will start from the initial sensitization phase. Without careful planning, in practice this might be difficult, given the bureaucracy involved in policy formulation against the time-scale agencies have to effect interventions. The intervening agency must have a very close relationship with the government as a long-term development partner. The best bet in this context would be to strengthen the learning and dialogue component of the interventions to ensure government policy implementers at local levels are empowered to understand and support the innovations as the pathways to strengthen the entire systems. This can then be a bottom-up transformation on the basis of practice-based evidence, not evidence-based practice (Bryk, 2015).

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## CHAPTER 2

# Fursa kwa Watoto ‘Opportunities for Children’ Programme Tanzania

### *Children in Crossfire*

#### **Abstract**

The Fursa kwa Watoto (FkW – ‘Opportunities for Children’) programme is a four-year multi-stakeholder<sup>14</sup> educational research initiative in Tanzania that aims to improve ‘school readiness’ and learning outcomes for children and build evidence on effective and scalable quality pre-primary education. The research aims to support the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania to achieve the vision and goals of the Education and Training Policy 2014 to build a citizenry that is educated, knowledgeable, skilled and proficient to contribute to national development.

There is growing evidence of the importance of early childhood education. The Lancet series of papers in September 2011 made a strong economic case for investing in young children. Researchers found that developing countries that invest in early childhood development and increase pre-school enrolment by 50% can realise up to a 17-fold return

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<sup>14</sup> Implementers: Children in Crossfire (CiC), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), Aga Khan University, Maarifa ni Ufunguo, Tanzania Home Economics Association (TAHEA) in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Vocational Training (MoEST) and schools in the Mwanza and Kilimanjaro regions; M&E support: Mathematica and Corporate Social Responsibility; Donor: Dubai Cares.



on that investment<sup>15</sup>. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have acknowledged this, with Goal 4, Target 4.2 sketching a scenario in which, by 2030, “all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education”.

There is limited evidence on what works in the provision of effective and scalable pre-primary education in Tanzania, which is a critical barrier to building the political will and developing clear, costed plans. The FkW programme intends to fill this gap by testing sustainable, scalable, and costed models for pre-primary interventions, providing evidence in the Tanzanian and East African context and beyond.

At the time of writing, the FkW programme had been operational for three years. A pilot phase has been completed and rigorously tested, and the roll-out phase has begun using tested methods in different schools.

## Research Context

### Global context

#### *Recognition of the impact of early education*

There is strong evidence that early childhood development and education programmes targeting vulnerable groups have significant impact.<sup>16</sup> The Lancet series of papers in September 2011 made a strong economic case for investing in young children. Researchers found that developing countries that invest in early childhood development and increase pre-school enrolment by 50% can realise up to a 17-fold return on that investment.<sup>17</sup> International commitment to provision of early education was made in the Dakar Framework for Action, 2000. UNICEF states that without quality early learning, children lack the foundations for success later in school.<sup>18</sup> Cognitive and linguistic delays can accumulate early in the lives of young vulnerable children and these gaps do not narrow over time.<sup>19</sup> Interventions to improve ‘school readiness’ have proven outcomes in learning, school completion, skills

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<sup>15</sup> The Lancet Child Development Reports (Sept 23rd 2011). Paper 2: “Strategies for reducing inequalities and improving developmental outcomes for young children in low-income and middle income countries”.

<sup>16</sup> World Bank, IEG Working Paper, Later Impacts of ECD Interventions.

<sup>17</sup> The Lancet Child Development Reports (Sept 23rd 2011). Paper 2: “Strategies for reducing inequalities and improving developmental outcomes for young children in low-income and middle income countries.”

<sup>18</sup> UNICEF ECD Strategy Tanzania, 2016.

<sup>19</sup> World Bank, IEG Working Paper, Later Impacts of ECD Interventions.

development and increased income levels across many countries.<sup>20</sup> The SDGs recognise the importance of early education in Goal 4, Target 4.2, and setting out the hope that, by 2030 it is ensured that “all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education”.

### *International research on improving quality of education*

There is a variety of conflicting international research on aspects of educational quality that has limited application to the East African and Tanzanian context. While there is strong evidence that attendance at high-quality pre-primary schools can positively affect learning outcomes, attendees may stagnate and their initial advantages may be lost if they go on to attend poor quality primary schools.<sup>21</sup> This has implications for the provision of pre-primary education in resource poor countries such as Tanzania. The following sections examine research into standard educational quality improvement approaches.

### *Teacher quality through training and pedagogy*

Evidence shows that teacher quality can have a positive impact on learning outcomes. International research suggests that, after family characteristics, teacher quality is the most important contributor to quality of education.<sup>22</sup> A World Bank (2004) analysis of learning outcomes in Ghana after 15 years found that teacher training was the second best way to improve test scores after textbook provision.<sup>23</sup> A recent meta-analysis of randomised control trials (RCTs)<sup>24</sup> also found that in-service teacher training yielded the second highest improvement in learning outcomes (next to computer assisted learning and tied with reductions in student-teacher ratios). Pedagogy strongly influences student understanding and in the United Kingdom has been shown to improve through in-service training.<sup>25</sup> However, limited evidence exists in East Africa linking in-service training and teacher pedagogical behaviour change; but there may be many factors contributing to this, including structural challenges and class sizes, and length and type of training, etc.

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<sup>20</sup> Arnold, C (2012).

<sup>21</sup> Magnusen et al. (2007).

<sup>22</sup> OECD (2005) and Thomas, S. (2008).

<sup>23</sup> However, it is not clear whether overall improvements to school quality affected scores.

<sup>24</sup> McEwan, P. (2013).

<sup>25</sup> UK examples include: Sylva et. al. (2004) and Moyles et al. (2002).

### *Teaching materials*

Evidence from Latin America suggests that instructional materials are effective when combined with a complementary component such as teacher training, but that materials alone are ineffective.<sup>26</sup> In China and Ecuador, computer assisted teaching and tutoring were associated with improvements in literacy and numeracy performance.<sup>27</sup> The FkW team concluded that computer assisted teaching is not a feasible approach for pre-primary schooling in the Tanzanian rural context.

### *Teacher-student ratios and incentive-based schemes*

Reductions in teacher-student ratios can have a positive effect on learning outcomes,<sup>28</sup> but this requires major revisions to teacher incentive structures, the employment of contract teachers and/or additional infrastructure, which is often out of the reach of individual education initiatives and unfeasible in resource poor contexts like Tanzania. Other incentive-based schemes, such as cash transfers for attendance, have been associated with negligible or even negative effects on learning outcomes.<sup>29</sup> Twaweza, an East African organisation, however, has synthesised research on incentives and found generally positive outcomes, depending on the type of incentive scheme used.<sup>30</sup>

### **Parent and community-centric interventions.**

After controlling for quality and quantity of childcare, family variables, especially maternal education, continue to be among the strongest predictors of children's cognitive and socio-emotional development and of their academic performance in primary school.<sup>31</sup> Unfortunately, parent-centred interventions are not only difficult to sustain but also face significant scalability challenges. However, there is evidence that integrating a quality parent partnership component into a school-centred intervention can still serve as a cost-effective enhancement to a school-centred programme.<sup>32</sup> Holistic integrated early childhood development programmes in the community have shown positive effects on educational outcomes. Recent results from an RCT found significant

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<sup>26</sup> McEwan, P. (2013).

<sup>27</sup> Rosas (2003); Mo et al. (2013).

<sup>28</sup> McEwan (2013).

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Twaweza (2012).

<sup>31</sup> See Montie et al. (2006) and Downer, J. and Pianta, R. (2006).

<sup>32</sup> See World Bank (2011, pp. 91-95), which finds evidence that parent engagement/ education add-ons improved learning outcomes in India, Bolivia, Argentina and Turkey.

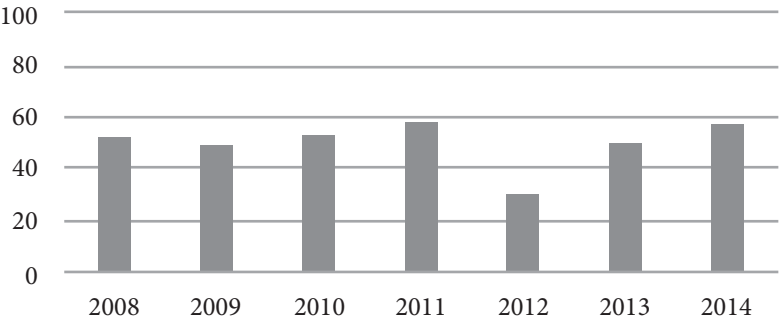
differences between control (no intervention) and treatment (ECD intervention) groups in terms of higher cognitive and precise motor skills, as well as select indicators of emotional development.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, Save the Children’s programme in Mozambique yielded positive results through integrated ECD programming, as well as an Aga Khan Foundation programme in Zanzibar.<sup>34</sup> However, integrated community and school interventions are often outside education-specific sector plans, require significant coordination, and are not easy to replicate.

Tanzanian context

Poor educational outcomes

Tanzania achieved a dramatic increase in primary school enrolment—from 59% in 2000 to 97.3% in 2007—with parity between girls and boys. However, while children are enrolled and attending school, emerging evidence suggests that they are not yet learning effectively. For example, only 57% of Tanzanian students passed the Primary School Leaving Exam (PSLE) in 2014.<sup>35</sup>

Figure 2.1: Percentage of Students that Pass the Primary School Leaving Exam (PSLE)



Primary school learning outcomes suggest that students are not acquiring the critical foundational skills during the early education years. Only 8% of Standard II<sup>36</sup> students performed at benchmark on oral comprehension, while 48% scored zero; 12% met standards on oral reading fluency while 28% scored zero on oral reading fluency.

<sup>33</sup> Martinez et al. (2012).  
<sup>34</sup> AKDN (2008).  
<sup>35</sup> Last year of primary school. Data from Twaweza / Uwezo 2014.  
<sup>36</sup> Second year of primary school.

And 8% met standards on addition and subtraction (level 2) while 43% scored zero.<sup>37</sup>

### *Pre-primary provision*

In 2016, only 46.7% of pre-primary-age children (ages 5 and 6) in Tanzania were enrolled in pre-primary classes. Uwezo's annual learning assessments in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda have continually found low quality of provision and fundamental challenges such as a high teacher-to-pupil ratio.<sup>38</sup> Before the launch of the fee-free education policy in 2016, the qualified teacher to pupil ratio was estimated at 1:158 (national standard is 1:25). Since 2016, with many more parents sending their children to school, the situation has deteriorated even more. The vast majority of qualified teachers are primary teachers and have no training in pre-primary education.

The other critical barriers to quality pre-primary education are poorly equipped classrooms; pedagogy not developmentally appropriate for young learners, including the lack of active and experiential learning activities; and minimal support by the broader school and community.<sup>39</sup> Pre-primary is often held in the lowest quality classroom spaces with few resources (88% of teachers do not have enough teaching and learning materials); has the least qualified teachers (48% of teachers are volunteers or paraprofessionals in Ilemela district in Mwanza region); and is excluded from school improvement plans (only 7 out of 60 schools reported receiving government support in 2014).<sup>40</sup> The government has recently announced that pre-primary classes are now eligible for capitation grants.

Data on child development outcomes, including early learning and school readiness, is sparse in Tanzania. There are no studies that show the impacts of pre-school/early learning and educational performance in later life. In addition, there is no costing data on various pre-primary models although this information is needed for government planning and the expansion of quality pre-primary education.

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Uwezo (2014), *Are Our Children Learning?*

<sup>39</sup> The Quality of Teaching and Learning in Tanzanian Pre-school and Pre-primary Classrooms (for children aged 3-5 and aged 5-6). A Rapid Appraisal Baseline Study, 2010.

<sup>40</sup> All data from Pilot Schools Mapping Baseline Report, September 22, 2014 (SoCha).

### *Policy in Tanzania*

Tanzania has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, domesticated through the Law of the Child Act (2009). A number of multi-sect oral and sect oral policies and programmes are relevant to pre-primary education:

Tanzania's Vision 2025 seeks to reduce poverty and build an economically viable nation, including achieving Middle Income status by 2025.

Tanzania's National Poverty Reduction and Development Plan (Mkukuta II 2010-2015) emphasises the need to "increase efforts to improve the quality of early childhood development" by increasing the number of facilities and number of children prepared for school. It also states the need for quality pre-school teacher training, effective use of resources, and review of the curriculum.

The current draft of the National Child Care, Growth and Development Policy is the product of an extensive national process to develop a National Integrated ECD Policy. It includes some attention to ECD, particularly in parenting and family care.

The Primary Education Development Plan III (PEDP III: 2012-2016) recognises that "children who benefit from quality pre-primary education programs are more likely to attend and do better in school. As adults, they also tend to lead healthier lives and contribute more to their society".<sup>41</sup> PEDP III has two objectives for pre-primary: (1) Increase access and equity at the pre-primary education level, and (2) Improve the quality of pre-primary education. As one strategy, PEDP III proposed the establishment of satellite centres for locations where children cannot currently attend school. The satellite centres will draw on a mix of government and community resources.

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) grant for Tanzania, was approved in November 2013, and based on the PEDP III. The GPE programme, entitled Literacy and Numeracy Education Support (LANES) contributes 94.8 Million USD between 2014 and 2017 toward multiple aims, including the improvement of mastery skills in literacy and numeracy in pre-primary and primary schools. The LANES programme includes support to the PEDP III initiative of establishing

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<sup>41</sup> PEDP III 2.1 Impact of Primary Education on Broader Economic and Social Goals (page 10).

satellite centres for reaching out to young children of age 5 to 74<sup>42</sup> who are unable to access pre- and lower primary schools. The LANES programme has recently been extended.

In February 2015, the president launched the new Education and Training Policy (ETP: 2014). This is a revision of the previous version from 1995. The previous policy called for two years of pre-primary education and ECD to build readiness to begin primary education, through well-directed play and learning activities. It noted that pre-primary should be age appropriate and should not be akin to “Standard I beginning two years earlier.” The 1995 ETP formalised the inclusion of pre-primary education into the formal education system through the requirement that each primary school should establish formal pre-primary classrooms attached to primary schools, and called for satellite pre-primary classrooms (community ‘owned’ but government ‘resourced’) planned for hard-to-reach areas where no pre-primary programme exists. The new ETP: 2014 makes one year of pre-primary education (for age 5) compulsory, and allows entry into pre-primary as early as age three.

## Rationale

The Government of The United Republic of Tanzania recognises that poor learning outcomes are a barrier to later learning achievement, as well as social and economic development. In response, ETP: 2014 expands compulsory, free, basic education to a total of 11 years<sup>43</sup> and calls for a strengthened system-wide focus on the quality of teaching and learning. Available evidence on primary school Standard II learning outcomes has been instrumental in securing political will and investment in the quality of primary education, and particularly early grade education. Efforts to strengthen teaching and learning, particularly in Standards One and Two, are on-going, but more data and information is needed to guide the development of comprehensive strategies that will positively impact learning outcomes.

The FkW programme presents an opportunity to build evidence on cost-effective, quality pre-primary models through the development, implementation, and evaluation of innovative pre-primary interventions

<sup>42</sup> The text in LANES on satellite centres for out-of-school children varies between diverse indications (5-13, 9-13) of the target group for these centres. As the PEDP III text, as well as the main descriptive text (page 53) on satellites in the LANES document regarding this component, targets pre-primary, although even that same section mentions a target age range of 5-7.

<sup>43</sup> 1 year pre-primary, 6 years primary, and 4 years secondary/O-levels.

in Tanzania. Results from the FkW programme will influence government decisions on pre-primary provision and have the potential to transform learning outcomes by Standard II.

## Research Questions

The FkW programme aims to answer the following questions:

1. *Does one year of quality pre-primary school improve school readiness prior to entering primary school and learning outcomes at standard-II? With what model and cost?*
2. *What are the factors that contribute to improved school readiness outcomes?*

The above questions will be answered (tested) through implementation of:

1. Enhanced pre-primary models; model one in pre-primary classes in primary schools and model two in pre-primary classes in satellites
2. Effective local level planning and management for quality pre-primary education
3. National policy and programme development, planning and budgeting processes supporting quality pre-primary education
4. High quality and rigorous monitoring, evaluation, and learning.

In answering these questions, the FkW intends to achieve the following outcomes:

*Outcome 1: Children demonstrate improved school readiness and learning outcomes in Standard II*

*Outcome 2: The Government of Tanzania has costed and proven models for equitable expansion of access to quality pre-primary education*

## Research Methods

### Programme design

The design of the FkW aims to assess ‘what works’ and, as such, a set of interventions has been implemented and tested in an 18-month pilot phase and is now being implemented in the roll-out phase. The FkW is collecting mixed qualitative and quantitative empirical data from programme interventions. The FkW was originally envisaged as an experimental RCT, which would compare the treatment and control group, with the ultimate measurement of children who have attended



one year of pre-primary being quantitative Standard II test data (two years after leaving pre-primary); however, changes in research context have made this unfeasible.<sup>44</sup> A new design is now being formulated for final impact evaluation.

The FkW model will be tested and evaluated, in the following areas:<sup>45</sup>

- Teacher training
- Stimulating learning environment
- Mentoring and school leadership
- Parent partnership programme
- Establish an enabling environment in which schools operate
- Policy dialogue and strengthening support at the national level.

Study area: The model is being implemented in Mwanza and Kilimanjaro regions (in government primary schools); and in Mbeya, Iringa, and Njombe regions (in satellite schools in remote areas).

### **Data collection**

The FkW programme is collecting direct and indirect evidence of improved teaching and learning in the pre-primary classrooms. Evidence is assessed through the collection of qualitative and quantitative data over two phases:

#### ***Pilot phase***

A pilot phase of 18 months has been completed. The main focus was Component 1, Model 1 – pre-primary interventions in government primary schools.<sup>46</sup> See Table 2.1 below for details on intervention components and data collection assessment methods.

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<sup>44</sup> In 2015, all pre-primary classes in government primary schools were declared free of parental contribution. While commendable in resource poor contexts, this has led to a significant increase in pre-primary enrolment and concurrently many para-professional teachers have stopped working given they were largely relying on support from parental contributions - resulting in many settings in a dramatic increase of the ratio of pupils to teacher. The implementing and M&E teams felt that this reduces chances of performance at Standard II and hence does not warrant an RCT.

<sup>45</sup> See Table 1 for more detail. The core of the programme comprises points 1-4 and is the same for both pre-primary classrooms in primary schools (implemented by CiC and local partners) and satellite schools (implemented by UNICEF).

<sup>46</sup>

**Table 2.1: Gathering Evidence During the Pilot Phase of Model 1**

| Intervention components to assess                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | How we assessed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Teachers demonstrate</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mastery of and implementation of key skills and practices in the classroom</li> <li>• Understanding of the FkW model and readiness to implement</li> <li>• Monitoring and support of all children's learning activities (teacher-led and children-led), conduct assessments</li> <li>• Preparation of high quality daily plans with teacher- and children- led activities</li> <li>• Development of lesson plans in line with MOEST curriculum</li> <li>• Favourable attitudes and skills to use positive behaviour management strategies</li> <li>• The use of circle time, effective transitions between lessons, scaffolding techniques, and reflective practices</li> <li>• Increased self-efficacy and belief that they can implement FkW.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher Training Evaluation tool and rubric (conducted prior to, immediately post, and 3 months post training)</li> <li>• Classroom observation (and photographs) assessed according to M&amp;E tools and a quality rubric</li> <li>• Assessment and scoring of daily lesson plans, assessed according to a quality rubric.</li> <li>• Qualitative teacher interviews</li> <li>• Qualitative interviews with head and deputy head teachers</li> <li>• Quantitative teacher survey.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Stimulating learning environment: transformed classrooms have:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wall displays, early child friendly furniture or mats, and space for children to move</li> <li>• Four learning areas (reading, writing, manipulation and board-games)</li> <li>• Learning materials and teaching aids collected or locally produced, and used</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner classroom observation</li> <li>• Photographs to be scored on the observable changes in the environment.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

| Intervention components to assess                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | How we assessed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning kits are used by all students.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>School leadership trained: head and deputy head teachers demonstrate:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful completion of the leadership training</li> <li>• Commitment to pre-primary education through the design of an Action Plan for the pre- primary class in their school</li> <li>• Implementation of the Action Plans they designed to improve the pre- primary class</li> <li>• They have implemented and revised actions plans as needed and demonstrated leadership to improve the conditions in which pre-primary education is organised in the school</li> <li>• As mentors and mentees, teachers and head teachers develop trustful, supportive relationships, using mentoring skills and leading to improvements in pre-primary education by the implementation of FkW.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership around pre-primary education is assessed by examining Action Plans</li> <li>• Qualitative teacher interviews</li> <li>• Qualitative head teacher and deputy head teacher interviews</li> </ul> <p>Short survey of all head teachers, deputy head teacher, mentors</p> |
| <b>Parent partnership programme:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are active partnerships focused on improving children's learning at school and at home?</li> <li>• Visits to the class to check progress, to help the teacher (tell stories, play games, cook food, make resources)</li> <li>• Meetings according to parent interest to discuss child issues (behaviour management, health and nutrition, appropriate play materials etc)</li> <li>• Application of strategies at home to enhance development of their child.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus group discussions with parents</li> <li>• Qualitative teacher interviews</li> <li>• Qualitative head teacher and deputy head teacher interviews</li> </ul>                                                                                                                 |

### ***Roll-out phase***

The strategies that were rigorously tested in the pilot phase are now being implemented in the roll-out phase. The assessments around key outputs as referenced in Table 1 are still taking place but at a lower frequency and depth of analysis.

The main assessment will be the direct evidence of student learning in the impact evaluation. As mentioned above, the original design was an RCT with impact evaluation based on Standard II exam results (two years after leaving pre-primary). However, due to increased numbers of students in pre-primary classes as a result of free pre-primary provision since late 2015, a new design and learning agenda is currently being formulated.

### ***Sample size***

The pilot phase sample for primary schools was 60 schools in two regions – approximately 3,239 children age four to six.

The roll-out phase sample for Model 1 is 120 schools in two regions – approximately 11,500 children. Since 2015, the policy of free pre-primary education has been initiated and this has dramatically increased the numbers of children in the classroom, up to 370 in Mwanza region.

### **Analysis of data**

Aga Khan University is conducting pre- and post-teacher training assessments and data is collected, analysed, and shared on improvement in teaching practices. This informs the on-going teacher support or supplementary training for teachers. The programme also monitors, collects, and analyses data on classroom attendance and learning environment and shares this with the implementing partners for targeted school support. Analysis of final data will be formulated in the new design.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Ethics have been carefully considered in the FkW programme. The Children in Crossfire Code of Conduct and Child Protection Policy has been applied, and all teachers and head teachers, as well as staff and partners, have received child protection training. Informed consent is sought in programme assessments, and feedback is given verbally following assessment such as observations. Teachers see checklists in advance so they know what they are being assessed on, and are shown

their scores. Any communication materials relevant to the schools and teachers are supplied to them. Control groups are admittedly at a disadvantage, as they are not receiving the full package of interventions; however, they are being incentivised with equipment and materials for their classrooms. The FkW respects confidentiality in its research and communications, and personal names are changed. Non-discrimination is an important aspect of the research, with teachers of both sexes, as well as teachers with disabilities, and socially/geographically disadvantaged teachers, having equal opportunities in training and support. Pregnant and nursing mothers are given consideration during the training sessions. Workshops and training include sessions on gender, inclusion, special needs, and individual learning styles to encourage teachers to cater for all children in their classes. Trainers and partner staff of both sexes are engaged to give balance to gender.

## **Evidence Prior to Impact Evaluation**

Qualitative assessments during the pilot phase and on-going qualitative assessments in the roll-out phase have yielded the following lessons:

### **Teacher training**

- There is an increase in the use of the session timetable, circle time, and interactive teaching approaches in the classrooms
- Teachers scored an average of 61% in application of learned strategies (lesson plan, instructional skills, procedures and resources, classroom management, and teacher reflective practice) in their first observation after teacher training, for example, and this increased to 84% after two mentoring sessions
- Teachers state that they feel more motivated by and proud of their job, as well as more valued by school leadership and communities
- Challenges persist around infrastructure, teacher shortages, large class sizes, inadequate quantity of materials, and language
- Follow-up training and mentoring is important in the development of lesson plans.

### **Stimulating learning environment**

- Appropriate utilisation of the learning areas in the majority of schools, with over 90% of classrooms observed having fair to excellent use and standard of materials - mainly 'fair' or 'good', and approximately 10% excellent, in 2015

- Interactive games and the reading corner are the most popular corners with the children. Focus in the roll-out includes ensuring all learning areas are equally attractive to the children
- In most schools the pre-primary is now better equipped and more secure than the other classrooms in the school
- Challenges persist in lack of funds for renovation of classrooms, large class sizes versus few learning materials, and parental contributions for learning materials.

### **Leadership and mentoring**

- Head teachers' and deputy head teachers' support to pre-primary teachers has increased over the implementation of the FkW programme. They have provided mentoring support, allocated resources to pre-primary classes, and most state that they value the pre-primary teacher
- Ward education officers and quality assurance officers pay more attention to pre-primary classes and visit them as part of their regular work.

### **Parent partnership**

- The success is seen in children's attendance as a result of provision of school meals, availability of teaching aids, and to lesser extent parental supervision of children (such as checking on their children and visiting the school)
- There is improved partnership between teachers and parents.

### **Dissemination of Results**

On-going data collected is being disseminated to the implementing partners and government officials. Technical working groups and steering committee meetings use the data to make informed decisions on the programme interventions. Every month, partner reports and a bulletin are sent to all relevant stakeholders to promote and update them on progress and best practices, and experiences and achievements are shared with various partners in education and ECD during stakeholder meetings. Relevant governmental departments have been involved throughout.

The FkW evaluation findings will be officially presented to the Government of Tanzania, informing of the costs and benefits of the FkW model. It may not be feasible for the government to use all of the elements of the programme, but it is anticipated that some of the

programme's elements will be selected for roll-out nationally, resulting in quality enhancement of Tanzania's pre-primary education.

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## CHAPTER 3

# Inclusion and Equity in Education for People with Special Educational Needs in Tanzania: A Critical Dimension to Economic Development

*M. K. Possi*

### **Abstract**

This paper critically analyses the education for people with special educational needs in Tanzania, focusing on inclusion and equity as critical dimensions to economic development. It commences with conceptual issues, defining the terms *inclusion*, *equity in education* and *related terms* for common understanding. The paper further dwells on how inclusion and equity have been implemented in Tanzania and whether or not the two add value to economic development. The challenges facing inclusion and equity in education with reference to individuals with special needs include but are not limited to: insufficient material and human resource facilities in special needs, which include poor infrastructure and inaccessibility to buildings; shortage of trained/qualified personnel; ignorance about inclusive education, as well as the nonexistence of clearly stipulated laws and regulations on special needs and inclusive education. Drawing from the challenges, recommendations are made for minimizing the challenges in inclusive

education. The recommendations are geared towards policy makers, practitioners in special needs education, researchers, parents, members of the community, as well as religious and traditional leaders. Among the recommendations are: revisiting the Tanzania Education Policy so that it properly captures special needs issues, improving teaching and learning conditions, as well as the school environment in general, to enable children with special needs to enjoy and learn in barrier-free inclusive settings. Awareness raising about inclusive and special needs education, increasing special needs education funding, as well as training of human resources, are among the recommendations made.

## Introduction

The National Policy on Disability (2004) urges the Tanzanian Government, in collaboration with stakeholders, to provide the necessary conducive environments for inclusive education. The Policy further emphasises the need to improve and increase skills training for persons with disabilities in settings that accommodate both disabled and non-disabled trainees.

*Inclusion* is a controversial term, which is oftentimes confused with the terms *integration* and *mainstreaming*. Many people, including some parents and teachers without a special needs education background, cannot differentiate the terms. To such people, the terms are considered one and the same. It is consequently important to define the terms for a common understanding of equity in special educational needs in relation to economic development. It is also important to ponder the following questions, which are often asked by many people - the affluent ones as well as parents of children with disability. The questions centre on concepts related to inclusion, what is to be taught in inclusive schools, teaching and learning techniques, as well as policies.

## Questions on concepts

- What is inclusion? What is inclusive education? How different is an inclusive school from a special school?
- What is the difference between inclusion, integration and mainstreaming?
- Should every child with special educational needs be educated in an inclusive school/classroom?
- Since some children have very severe disability while others have mild ones, who should be included and who should be excluded?

### Questions on content and teaching and learning

- Are students with special needs included in education and social activities in Tanzanian schools?
- Do the children receive the support they need in the schools?
- How different are the teaching and learning environments in special and inclusive schools?
- Is the school environment conducive for various activities such as play among children with special needs?
- What is the situation of teaching and learning equipment for children with special needs?
- Is the inclusive education system preparing students for self-reliance?
- Is the inclusive education system in Tanzania preparing students for economic development?

### Questions on policy

- It is well understood that children with special needs are sent to special and integrated schools. Do we need inclusive schools?
- How much have the education policies in Tanzania contributed to special needs and inclusive education in the fifty years of independence?
- Is educating a child in an inclusive school better than sending him/her to a special school?

All the aforementioned questions demand clear definitions and elaborations thereof. It is therefore important to define concepts in the context of this paper.

### Conceptual Issues

It is of paramount importance that one gets a clear understanding of the term inclusion and its related terms, i.e. inclusive education, and equity.

#### What is inclusion?

The term inclusion is very controversial. To a certain extent, it is interrelated with the terms *inclusive education*, and *equity*. Noteworthy, is that the terms reflect issues on equal access, treatment, and acceptance, etc. Wherever and whenever they are used, issues on the four aspects, including one's background, i.e. origin, race, ethnicity, religion, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and some culturally and socially accepted differences are unavoidable. The terms imply, for instance, that one should not be denied access to education or economic

entrepreneurship because of disability, and that one should not be segregated or denied access to facilities or participation just because of his/her individual differences or even according to his/her origin, race, ethnicity, religion, age, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

It is generally stated that inclusion is a human right that lays the foundation for a just and equal society. The term refers to practices in which different groups or individuals with different backgrounds are culturally and socially accepted, welcomed, and equally treated. The term stems from the sociological notion of inclusiveness that is the basis of political action and personal efforts. Inclusion has to do with diversity. The process of inclusion engages each individual and makes people feel more valued, and included (Possi, 2016). Miller et al. (2002) state that inclusion is a sense of belonging; feeling respected, valued for who you are; feeling a level of supportive energy and commitment from others so that you can do your best work. Inclusion is a shift in organisation culture. One should definitely not, for example, be denied access to education because of disability, and one should not be segregated or denied access to facilities just because of their individual differences.

On the other hand, Lorema et al. (2010) define inclusion as a term that refers to:

“...the full participation of all students in all aspects of schooling. It involves regular schools and classrooms being responsive, willing to genuinely adapt and change to meet all needs of students as well as celebrating and valuing differences based on gender, culture, ability, sexual orientation, socio-economic context, religion or any other areas in which learning or development is impacted.”

This definition does not imply that students with differing learning needs will not receive specialised assistance or teaching outside the classroom when required, but rather that this is just one of many options available - extra help in the course of a school day should be the norm for all. The definitions definitely emphasise the acceptance and positive treatment of people with special needs from a human rights perspective. All in all, all the definitions focus on the acceptance or exclusion of individuals with disabilities, hence encompassing individual differences.

### **Inclusive education**

Currently, the term Inclusive Education is widely used in special needs education the world over and hence in Tanzania. The Kiswahili translation of inclusive education is *Elimu Jumuishi*, as used in Mainland Tanzania. In Zanzibar, the term is referred to as *Elimu Mjumuisho*. Both terms

mean the same and refer to a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures, and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. Further, with reference to Stubbs (2008), the term implies that there have to be changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures, and strategies with a common vision that covers all children of the appropriate age range and that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children.

According to the National Policy on Disability (2004), inclusive education is defined as a system of education in which all children, youths or adults are enrolled, actively participate and achieve in regular schools and other educational programmes regardless of their different backgrounds and abilities, without discrimination, through minimization of barriers and maximization of resources. This definition is narrowly focusing on education. Inclusive education calls for the diversification of education provision towards achieving the highest degree of all learners' participation, taking into consideration their special needs. With inclusion, learners with special needs or disability are educated in the same schools, classrooms, settings or environments as learners without such needs. Not only that, but also, teachers have to consider issues pertaining to disability, giftedness and talent, gender, culture, religion, ethnicity, etc.

Through inclusive education, environments are modified so that they enable students with special needs to learn together. Teachers and those working in the school system have to accommodate the diversity needs of students so that the latter are included in all aspects. With inclusion, all barriers that hinder learning and participation of disabled children have to be identified and removed to enable students to learn and participate effectively within mainstream school systems. Placing special needs students within a mainstream setting is not sufficient to be called inclusion. Ngoda (2016) defines inclusive education as the pairing of philosophy and pedagogical practices that allow each student to feel respected, confident and safe so he or she can learn and develop to his or her full potential. It is based on a system of values and beliefs centred on the best interests of the student, which promotes social cohesion, belonging, and active participation in learning; as well as the fostering of a complete school experience, characterised by positive interactions with peers and others in the school community. Schools and communities will share these values and beliefs.

Lastly, inclusive education refers to an education system open to all students, which encourages and ensures equal participation for all students in the school learning environment regardless of their disability, ability, or gender. It emphasises active learning, applied curriculum, multi-level instructional approaches, as well as paying attention to diverse student needs and individualization. In inclusive education, environments are modified so as to enable students with special needs to learn together. Teachers and all members of staff working in the school system have to accommodate the diversity needs of students. Students, on the other hand, are included in all aspects of school life. With inclusion, all barriers that hinder learning and participation of children with special needs are removed to enable all students to learn and participate effectively within the mainstream school system despite their disabilities or gender.

In this paper the term *inclusion* will refer to equality and the right to be mainstreamed irrespective of one's unique needs, disability, culture etc. Education for All (EFA), to which Tanzania is a signatory, is concerned with equal access to education for all. As for *inclusive education*, in this paper, the term will be used to refer to a system of education in which all children, youths and adults are enrolled, actively participate and achieve in regular schools and other educational programmes regardless of their diverse backgrounds and abilities, without discrimination, through minimisation of barriers and maximisation of resources (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, National Strategy on Inclusive Education, 2009 – 2017).

This definition is in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of 2006, which states that all countries should ensure equal access to primary and secondary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning in inclusive settings. In order to realise the benefits underpinning the philosophy of inclusive education, throughout the world, education practices are supposed to employ the appropriate materials, techniques, and forms of communication required to meet the diverse needs of learners in inclusive classrooms (UNESCO, 2000).

## Equity

The term *equity* is defined as promotion of equal opportunity and fair treatment for men and women in the personal, social, cultural, political, and economic arenas. Gender equity entails meeting women's and men's, girls', and boys' needs in order for them to:

- Participate fully in civil society, in education, the economy etc. and;
- Compete in the formal and informal market;
- Fulfil their familial roles adequately, without being discriminated against.

The term also refers to a condition in which women and men participate as equals, have equal access to resources and equal opportunities to exercise control. It further means men and women being given their social rights, or being on par, i.e. women and men having accessibility to what they deserve. In this paper, the term will refer to the condition in which women and men with and without disability participate as equals, have equal access to resources and equal opportunities to exercise control, and access education without discrimination.

## **Equality**

The concept equality refers to equal treatment of men and women in every social aspect. Giving equal chances, for instance, to both girls and boys (with or without disability) in answering questions, and participating in practical exercises in the classroom, without discrimination, is one example of equality. This definition is used in the paper.

## **Economic Development**

This term *economic development* is used to refer to development in the economy of the country whereby products or goods are sold and the money is used for development such as sending children to school, eating well, building hospitals, etc. Access to education is a fundamental human right, which may have future impact in economic development. The capability approach identifies education as one of the basic abilities that provides the basis for expanding further capabilities. Inclusion International (2006) shows that in addition to the central role of education in individual development, education plays a key role in the economic growth of a country and is expected to raise the living standard of a population, and as a result, should be a step towards rectifying poverty. One of the main premises of education is to create a knowledge-based society that is also expected to have a positive effect on economic development.

## **Discussion on equity in education and economic development in Tanzania**

Experience shows that despite the efforts made in Tanzania to treat children with and without disability as equals in education and other arenas, many parents still prefer their children with special needs to be enrolled in special schools, simply because they want the children to be away in boarding schools, giving more time for parents to be involved in economic development. Further, it is also believed by some parents that their children in special schools perform better academically than if they were in an inclusive school, and therefore that educating children with disabilities in special schools can make them contributing members of society. It is true that education facilitates economic changes. When one gets appropriate knowledge he/she can use it in development endeavours. But, is it only in special schools that children can get education that enables them to be contributing members of society as far as a country's economy is concerned?

On the other hand, there are parents who send their children to special schools based on the severity of the disability because they feel that the children will benefit more by being imparted with functional and social skills to assist them in taking care of themselves with minimal engagement of the parents. They have a feeling that their children in inclusive or integrated schools may not attain such skills. They believe that children in special schools will get time to work and participate in economic activities that can facilitate their future lives, as well as their family upkeep, etc.

In terms of research, findings indicate that special schools have better human and material resources than the inclusive ones. We have also observed that in Tanzania, students in special classrooms are performing better academically than those in inclusive schools, echoing what Possi (1986) found with integrated and special schools. The reason is that in special schools, most teachers are more qualified and committed to teach and have placed high value and expectations on their students. The teacher-student ratio is low enough for the teachers to be able to and have time to modify the curricula as necessary for their students. Since the classes are smaller compared to those in integrated settings, it is easy for teachers to have some kind of individualised curricula for the students. According to Possi (1986) such modifications need time, money, expertise, and commitment. Ngoda (2016) emphasises that special needs education teachers should always use the best strategies/methods, teaching and learning facilities/equipment and materials. The



author also clearly shows that teachers in special needs schools should undergo specialised training to correctly handle children with special educational needs.

In Tanzania, there is inequity in education on the side of students with disability in terms of number of schools and their positions in the country. First, there are regions with better schools which are privately owned, most of them being in urban areas, and which do not enrol students with disability. Students in most of the schools perform better in national examinations than those in government and rural areas. Also, most of the schools are situated in regions which are economically able and well equipped through school fees and donations. Things are different with schools in rural areas where some of the required special teaching and learning materials are not found. As a result, the schools and students suffer from inadequate access to teaching and learning equipment such as laboratory equipment and geography materials, or even Braille machines and Perking Brailleurs. How does one expect such students to perform well and become productive members of a nation? How can graduates from such schools contribute to economic development?

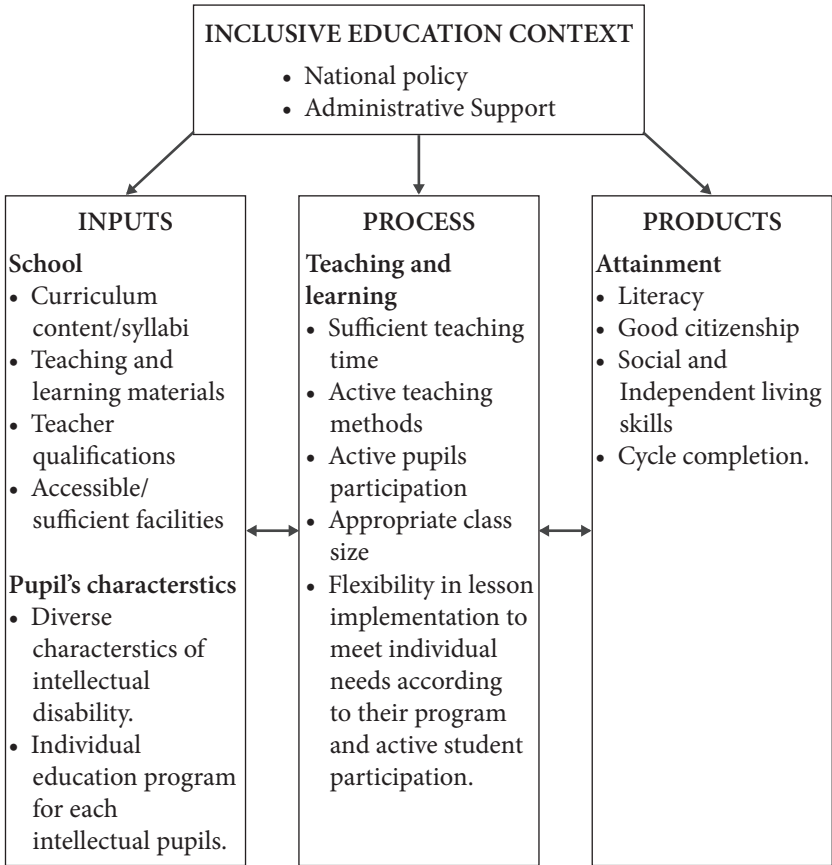
Schools and educational institutions with appropriate teaching and learning materials, as well as sufficient numbers of well-trained and qualified teachers, are able to utilise the available and appropriate teaching and learning materials to perform their tasks; they are able to communicate well, for instance in Braille, sign language or total communication, depending on whether or not the students have visual impairment or have deafness, communication disorders, etc. In this paper, responses to the two questions and inclusivity issues are discussed using Figure 3.1 which indicates the relationship between inclusion in education and economic development.

Children/students with special needs, like other students, may not be able to perform well if they are enrolled in schools with shortages of teaching and learning materials. The latter are of paramount importance in teaching. At the same time, active teaching methods and modification with appropriate class size can facilitate the teaching and learning of children with special needs.

The situation in Tanzania is challenging. Currently, the inclusive classrooms in the country are overcrowded, making paying attention to students with special needs difficult. The aspect of teaching methods becomes difficult because many of the teachers do not have specialised training, while others do not use appropriate teaching aids and

techniques. The use of sign language specialists in teaching of students with hearing impairment is also challenging since there is a shortage of expertise in the area. In fact, students at times use their colleagues to translate some lessons or lectures for them. Using poor teaching methods and techniques such as lecture methods without interactions does not enhance active student participation, resulting in inequity as far as accessing knowledge is concerned. Other problems include big class sizes and over-crowded classrooms, which make it difficult for teachers. There is also no flexibility in lesson implementation to meet individual needs according to their program because of a lack of or shortage of teaching and learning materials, as well as having in place unqualified teachers to teach students with disability.

**Figure 3.1: Conceptual Framework: The Inclusion and Equity in Education for Learners with Special Educational Needs**



Due to a shortage of teaching and learning materials and other issues indicated in the diagram, students may either drop out or graduate half-baked. Consequently, they may also not be able to live independently and become contributing members of the nation. They may be dependent socially as well as materially. This situation affects taxpayers who will have to pay heavier taxes, and does not impart economic gain to the country, resulting in major problems for both disabled and nondisabled youths.

It can therefore be concluded that children educated in an inclusive education system can be contributing members of the community, given proper implementation of the country's Inclusive Education Policy supported by The National Strategy on Inclusive Education (2009-2017). The strategy aims to achieving the following:

- Educational policies and programmes are informed by inclusive values and practices.
- Teaching and learning responds to diverse needs of learners
- Educational support is available to all learners
- Professional capabilities for inclusive education are widened and strengthened
- Community ownership of and participation in inclusive education is enhanced.

Despite the aims and purposes, there are several barriers to implementing inclusive education, equity, and economic development as indicated in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1: Barriers to Inclusion, Equity and Economic Development in Education for People with Special Educational Needs in Tanzania**

| Barriers in policies                                                                                   | Barriers in practices                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Barriers in cultures                                                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Inadequate policy and regulatory frameworks in addressing diversity and promoting inclusive education. | Uneven distribution of resources by basing on population ratios that fail to take into account other sources of support at the disposal of some schools e.g. schools owned/supported by the private sector – faith based institutions compared to public/ community schools. | Lack of awareness and resistance towards change among implementers. |

| Barriers in policies                                                                                                                                        | Barriers in practices                                                                                            | Barriers in cultures                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Inadequate budget allocation resulting in shortages in teacher education, equipment, learning materials, etc., as well as overcrowding and poor facilities. | Limited number and capacity of staff to cater for diversity at different levels.                                 | Limited value placed on education by communities/parents. |
| Physical barriers to accessing education, e.g. lack of transport, poor roads, inaccessible buildings.                                                       | Not enough teacher colleges to train sufficient numbers of teachers as required in schools.                      | Irresponsible parents or inadequate support from parents. |
| Regular teacher training and inclusive teacher training are not planned and developed to achieve proper standards.                                          | Volume of teacher in-service training inadequate.                                                                | Poor teaching and learning techniques among teachers      |
| Lack of incentives for teachers, particularly for resource/specialist teachers.                                                                             | Lack of health services including provision of first aid facilities.                                             |                                                           |
| Inadequate budget allocation to provide educational support for learners who face barriers to presence, participation and learning.                         |                                                                                                                  |                                                           |
| Inadequate measures in education to alleviate the impact of abject poverty.                                                                                 | Geographical barriers, including long distances to school                                                        |                                                           |
|                                                                                                                                                             | Inadequate and inappropriate school infrastructure, including toilets, playing grounds, classes, teacher houses. |                                                           |
|                                                                                                                                                             | Clinging to teacher-centred pedagogy                                                                             |                                                           |
| Poor implementation strategies of policies, programmes and curricula.                                                                                       |                                                                                                                  |                                                           |

| Barriers in policies                                                                                        | Barriers in practices | Barriers in cultures |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| The legacy of Special Needs Education works against adoption of inclusive education policies and practices. |                       |                      |

Source: Modified from National Strategy on Inclusive Education (2009-2017).

From what is observed in Table 3.1, it is difficult to implement equity and inclusion in education in accordance with UNESCO's holistic and rights-based approach in equity and inclusion, which states that:

- Education is a public good and a human right from which nobody can be excluded
- Every child should receive inclusive quality education
- A particular focus should be on vulnerable and marginalised groups
- Rights of non-discrimination and full participation should be observed.

### Other challenges in inclusive education

- **Access:** While students with disability are entitled to get free education, this is only feasible in government schools, not in private ones. This means that students with disabilities or special needs wishing to be educated in private schools, closer to their homes, cannot do so if their parents cannot pay school fees
- **Inaccessible buildings:** In many schools most buildings are inaccessible. There are no ramps. Neither are doors wide enough for learners on wheel chairs. There are also problems with toilets, which are not user friendly for learners with visual as well as physical disability. A study by Apolinali (2007) shows that students with disabilities enrolled in Pugu Secondary School in Tanzania had difficulty accessing various buildings, including toilets. Santrock (2009) contends that school environment has a direct impact on general understanding and learning of a child while at school. Children with disabilities can perform well if they are placed in a supportive environment that considers their needs.
- **Human Resources:** Inclusive schools face an acute shortage of qualified teachers in special needs education. This is similar to what Ngogomela (2014) saw in his study, contending that most teachers in inclusive schools are not trained in special needs education, let alone inclusive education.

*“Most teachers are ready for inclusive education in their schools but they are in need of training to equip them with skills and knowledge. All teachers cited lack of pre and in-service training as an obstacle to successful inclusive education.”*

### **Problems dealing with pedagogical methods**

- Teachers are supposed to modify the curriculum to suit learners with special needs but cannot do so because they have a very big work load due to large numbers of students which negatively affect the teaching and learning process. However, because many teachers are not trained in inclusive education, it becomes difficult for them to teach and assess students properly. There is need for teachers to implement the inclusive education curriculum, as well as translate into practice the intended objectives to enable learners to become independent problem solvers capable of independent living.
- Cross cutting issues: It is difficult to handle cross cutting issues such as gender and minority aspects since some teachers lack the skills and awareness in the areas.
- Teaching and learning materials are insufficient in most schools for learners with special needs. The children are therefore not able to receive quality inclusive education. Because of the shortage of teaching and learning materials as well as lack of trained teachers, the rights of non-discrimination and full participation are not being observed.

One member of staff who participated in research conducted by Ngogomela (2014) had the following to say on teaching and learning materials,

“We have students with mental disability in our inclusive school. --- Unfortunately our teachers are struggling hard to teach because of lack of teaching aids. Some students fail due to lack of teaching and learning aids.”

Another observation is that some students with special needs, such as those with albinism, are having a rough time in inclusive settings since they do not have access to specialised equipment, let alone the stigma attached to the condition which even carries with it the danger of death, as apparent in the on-going murder of those with albinism.

Apart from the aforementioned, Tanzania faces the following challenges with respect to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

- Problems in conceptualisation of the three terminologies, i.e. equality, diversity, and inclusion; equality is translated simply as treating a person as equal without considering his/her special needs, and diversity is mainly considered to consist in differences in culture and religion.
- The term *inclusive education* is hard to grasp because it takes on board other aspects, e.g. gender. Inclusion is misunderstood to be physical placement of people with disability and not considering other aspects. One can dare say that inclusive education in Tanzania has a long way to go. Consequently, people need to be educated on the terminology and implementation.
- Challenges such as negative perceptions and stigmatisation have to be countered for the development of education of students with special needs.
- Gender inequity, inequality, discrimination and stereotyping still exist in Tanzania despite many efforts made by the government and interested parties. Females become disadvantaged due to, among other factors, gender stereotypes, segregation, bias, early marriages, etc. Teachers often complain that female students drop out due to pregnancy, having to take care of sick relatives, etc.
- Many women and men with disabilities are not often given chances to exert their skills because of negative attitudes towards people with disability.
- Empirical data throughout the world show that women are under-represented both in the school system and employment market. The relative significance of this gender imbalance increases with each stage of education and level of employment. Things are worse for women and men with disabilities. Women are more affected than men. It is well known that women with disabilities are more likely to be unemployed than men with disabilities, with women under-represented in almost every work arena. Women earn substantially less, and are less likely to find jobs because of their conditions.

### Way Forward

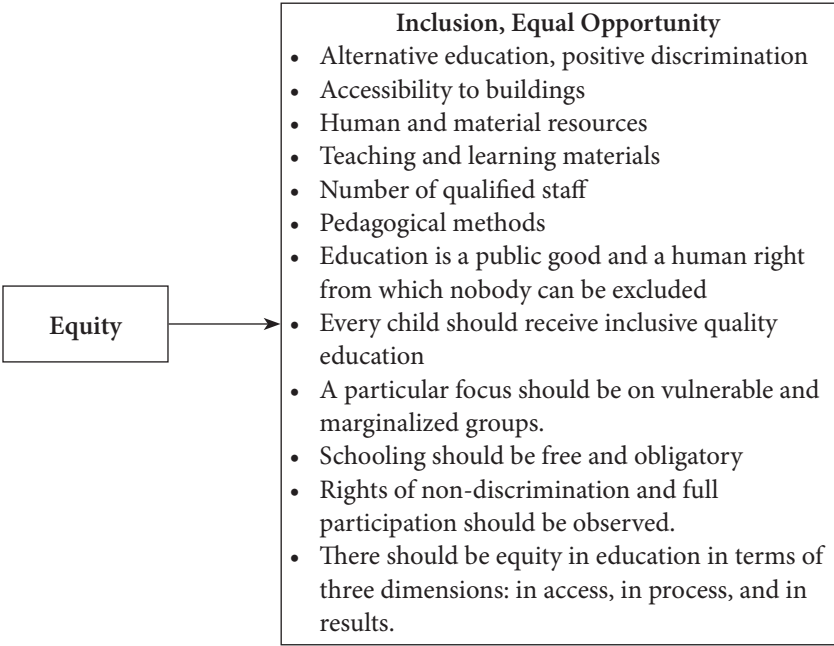
How can the National Strategy on Inclusive Education (2009-2017) be implemented for the purpose of empowering the nation economically when there are so many inclusivity challenges? Things have to change. It should be noted that if children with special needs are enrolled in schools where they are well included, taught by qualified teachers, and are skilled to be independent critical thinkers and empowered through

functional skills, they can definitely become independent, self-sufficient, and contributing members in the economy of the country. They will not be in homes for people with disability waiting to be taken care of; neither will they be on the streets begging. Further, with inclusive education teachers are able to teach all learners without discrimination based on their gender, social economic status, ethnic group, or religion, etc.

We have seen that the process of inclusion is complex, hence requiring guidance and commitment. It should be remembered that the Tanzanian Education and Training Policy (1995) recommended that all disadvantaged groups should access and receive education regardless of their physical, cognitive, or social conditions. Most of all, it stated that education in Tanzania should be offered through inclusive settings. This means that all government schools should enrol students with disability, knowing that students with disability may need to be educated in schools closer to their homes. Also, students with disability should not be discriminated against, meaning that the members of staff and all educational personnel should not embrace biases, in terms of disability, gender, race, tribe, etc.

The aforementioned challenges are presented in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2: Equity and Inclusion in Education



Source: Author's creation



The Tanzania Inclusive Education Policy states that learners with special educational needs should be educated in inclusive settings where they can interact with all other learners. However, with very severe conditions that require special attention, alternative settings such as special schools or even homes are necessary. For instance, in Tanzania special schools for the learners with visual and hearing impairments exist and positive discrimination is allowed for such children to get relevant services. My argument is that since education is a public good and a human right, nobody should be excluded and that education for learners with special needs should be free and obligatory.

## Summary and Conclusions

This paper clearly shows that our education system is not well designed to cater for students with special needs, and hence does not prepare them well for the world of work and economic development. Every child, regardless of his or her abilities and disabilities, has a fundamental right to education, which should not be denied since individuals with disabilities and special educational needs are part and parcel of society. Through appropriate inclusive education they can improve the economy of the country. They should be given the opportunity to learn with their colleagues who are non-handicapped, just as the late President of Tanzania, Mwalimu Nyerere, advocated for integration and care for those with disabilities. He said the following words when he was laying a foundation stone for Buguruni School for the Deaf in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in 1974,

“Since there are certain things that the handicapped cannot do; that means there are certain jobs he cannot do and certain aspirations this man cannot have. But there are certain things that a disabled person could have done if only we, the able bodied people, were willing to help him in his bid. A blind young man trained in handling a telephone exchange can only do so if he is given such a job. A young cripple can only become a clerk or factory machine operator if, when he asks for a job, he gets it.

It is our obligation to ensure that these children have the opportunity to enter regular schools and make sure we help them in their problems.”

Indeed, we have the obligation to make sure that inclusive education for students with special needs is properly implemented. However, we should know that not every child with special needs should be employed in inclusive classrooms. Children with very severe disabilities may still be educated in special settings, i.e. they may receive homebound services.

## Recommendations

- Professional capabilities for inclusive education should be widened and strengthened so that teachers are trained on how to handle students with disabilities in inclusive settings.
- There is a need to improve teacher training so that teacher trainees get appropriate teaching and learning techniques for handling inclusive classrooms. Teaching and learning processes should respond to diverse needs of learners. The education programmes in our teacher education colleges should be designed and implemented to meet the students' diverse needs. With inclusive learning, children's' needs should be considered both inside and outside the classroom.
- The availability of teaching and learning materials for special needs education is important for improving the teaching and learning conditions in schools for children with special needs in inclusive settings. Educational support should be available to all learners.
- Awareness raising on inclusive and special needs education among members of the community, starting with those in school boards. Community ownership of and participation in inclusive education is enhanced in this way.
- Members of staff and the community at large should make sure that they are at the forefront in the combat and prevention of discriminative attitudes and in building up an inclusive society.
- All teachers should have an inclusive orientation.
- The government should see to it that there is sufficient funding for inclusive education.
- Schools should be made accessible for students with special needs. The students must have access to regular schools with adapted education.

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## CHAPTER 4

# **Industrialisation and Economic Development in Tanzania: Exploring the Role of Evidence-Based Public Policy Making in Education Policy**

*Catherine Gerald Mkude*

### **Abstract**

The world today is faced with political, democratic, economic, socio-cultural and environmental challenges that need even more careful public policy choices. For developing countries, concerns continue to arise with regards to availability of clean water, food, employment, and quality and accessible education, to mention but a few. Governments, more than ever, are required to make informed policy choices that will address such development concerns. The formal government responses to different public needs are addressed through public policies. Public policy-making stages are complex in the way that they are conceptualised in the literature. The most commonly accepted illustration of public policy-making is the stages heuristic, which involves five key stages: problem identification, agenda setting, policy formulation, policy adoption, policy implementation and policy evaluation, with feedback mechanisms among these stages. Tanzania is among the developing countries that strive to continue steering economic development.

Significantly, the current government aims to steer industrialisation that will see Tanzania among the middle economy countries. The role of higher education cannot be underestimated in driving this ambitious aim. The education policy must be a key facilitator of envisaged economic productivity and not a hindrance. Tanzanians must be equipped and facilitated to drive the foreseen era of development. To construct such a policy, the government needs to make informed decisions that are grounded on research and evidence. Research plays a key role in helping decision makers to identify the policy problem and to formulate the policy agenda. Through research, decision makers' understanding of the policy problem is deepened and the challenges that might hinder the implementation of the policy are highlighted. Evidence-based policy-making processes involves the use of background documents to depict the policy problem and to draw scenarios of different policy solutions. Through such evidences and scenarios, it is possible to ensure that the decisions made at this high level have desired impacts in economic development. However, there is still a gap in the uptake of research by policy makers, which is well documented in literature. The case raises a twofold need for extensive research: (1) to explore the role of evidence-based public policy making in education policy along the key stages of public policy making identified above; and (2) to examine the application of evidence-based public policy making in re-inventing the education policy that facilitates the current era of economic developments. To start with, this research paper falls in the first objective. The paper aims to explore the importance of actively involving research in public-policy making in Tanzania. The paper will draw on international experiences in evidence-based public policy making. The exploratory research reveals that evidence-based policy making is a crucial ingredient in making public policies. It also plays a key role in bridging policy and research. In the current times, policy makers need to employ research outcomes in a way that sustainability and resilience are actively reflected in policies. Considering the role of education policy in economic development, the recommendations provided in the paper target policy makers, who are among the key stakeholders in public-policy making. The recommendations also target researchers, who can steer further research, particularly in application of the recommendations.

**Keywords:** *evidence-based, public policy making, education policy, economic development*

## Introduction

Governments in developed and developing countries are now faced with critical challenges to learn from the Millennium Development Goals and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. At regional and country levels, goals are also defined to drive success. In Tanzania, it is no different. The government is more determined to boost economic development towards a middle-income status. In the midst of such ambitions, the role of higher education in socio-economic development and welfare cannot be underestimated.

Higher education plays a critical role in shaping the workforce needed to drive innovation in the current and future generation. It becomes imperative to consider transformation in higher education institutions and modes of education delivery. A broad perspective is offered by Weber's Human Capital Theory which simply implies that education – acquisition of skills and knowledge – is an investment to produce economic value. For the effects to be positive, the education system at different levels must be geared towards development of knowledge and skills to support an industrialised economy. Better yet, for an ambitious developing country like Tanzania, inclusive education must be central to its agenda in its plans to move to middle income economy status. Inclusive education will ensure equal opportunities to all, especially marginalised populations. These huge transformations are embedded in the decisions that the government makes at national, regional and local levels. An example of such a decision is the waiving of education fees for primary and secondary schools. The key issue here is how policy choices are informed and whether they are based on evidence so that the envisaged socio-economic benefits are facilitated and, at best, achieved.

This paper explores evidence-based public policy making, including its importance in making policy choices, especially in Tanzania. The main objective of the paper is to explore the role of evidence-based public policy making in education policy along the key stages of public policy making. The paper aims to draw conclusions from different international empirical studies to provide recommendations for public policy making in Tanzania. The policy of waiving education fees will be used as the main example throughout the research. The main research methods employed are desk research (analysis of relevant documentations) and a literature review.

The research targets public policy makers, who are among the key stakeholders in public policy making. The recommendations also target

researchers, who can undertake further research, particularly involving the application of the recommendations.

The remainder of the paper is as follows: section 2 briefly addresses the role of education policy in industrialisation and economic development. Section 3 introduces evidence-based public policy making. Then, section 4 illustrates international experiences in evidence-based public policy making. This section will cover the significance of this approach in public policy making. Section 5 will then follow with discussion and recommendations. Finally, section 6 will conclude the research paper with an outlook to future research.

### **The Role of Education Policy in Industrialisation and Economic Development**

In any country, there are political, democratic, economic, socio-cultural and environmental challenges that need careful public policy choices. For developing countries, concerns continue to arise with regards to availability of clean water, food, employment, and high-quality and accessible education, to mention just a few. The formal government responses to different public needs are addressed through public policies. This is no different for the education sector in Tanzania. As a response to the longstanding education challenges in the country, the government issued the new Education Policy of 2014<sup>47</sup>. The policy aims to address different areas of interest such as the quality of schools, colleges and university, quality of education and training at all levels, the availability of teaching and learning infrastructure and teachers.

The Education Policy 2014 explicitly notes the role of education in industrialisation and economic development by stating that the education and training sector is expected to bring about development of skills and human capital. The policy also states that a Tanzania with educated Tanzanians will bring about the required transformation towards a middle income economy by 2025. Accordingly, as stipulated in the policy, the policy must back strategic actions that provide opportunities for learning and self-learning.

Different studies have suggested several ways in which higher education promotes economic growth. Ozsoy (2008) outlines five areas of promotion: income growth, creating new technology, enlightenment of leaders, expansion of choices and increasingly relevant skills and knowledge. According to the author, higher education contributes

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<sup>47</sup> [http://www.tanzania.go.tz/egov\\_uploads/documents/SERA\\_ya\\_Elimu\\_2\\_sw.pdf](http://www.tanzania.go.tz/egov_uploads/documents/SERA_ya_Elimu_2_sw.pdf).

to the national productivity, quality of life, entrepreneurial energy, strengthening of societies, and promotion of political and democratic governance. The vitality of education in socio-economic development certainly determines the nation's position in the world economy.

On the same lines, Bloom et al. (2006) identify two areas – public and private – where higher education contributes to economic growth. Private channels include better quality of life for individuals and better employment prospects. Public channels, though recognised as secondary (or unseen), include raised tax returns, technologically advanced societies, the knowledge economy and better governance through the nurture of governance and leadership skills. The research also provides several empirical evidences of the contributions of higher education in economic growth documented in research from UK, Taiwan, France, Japan and Sweden.

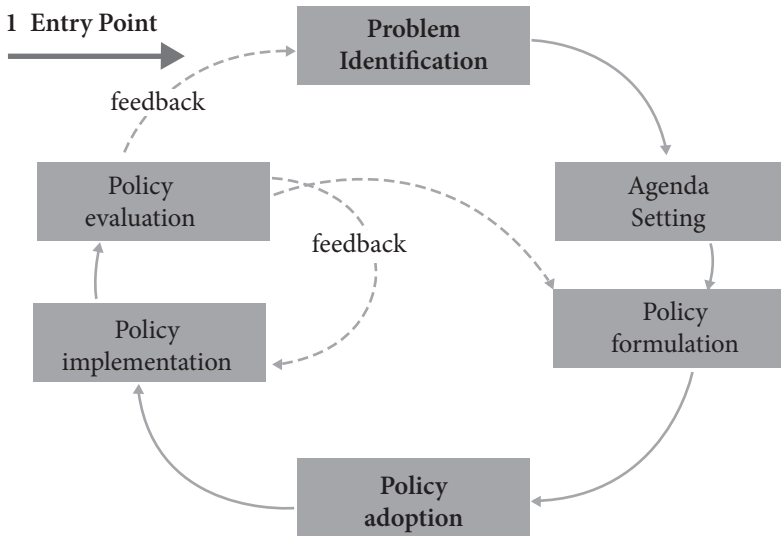
The choices and actions undertaken by government officials, and the private and civil society sectors, regarding education developments are governed, principally, by the education policy. This implies that governments ought to ensure that they produce an education policy that facilitates the developments outlined above and even steers economic growth. The “right” education policy that is well-grounded in evidence is one that envisages the intended impacts. The subsequent sections introduce and discuss evidence-based public policy making.

### **Evidence-based Public Policy Making**

Public policies and decisions need to be carefully thought-through, planned and executed to bring the envisaged impacts in economic development. Public policy-making stages are complex in the way that they are conceptualised in the literature. The most commonly accepted illustration of public policy-making is the stages heuristic, which involves: problem identification, agenda setting, policy formulation, policy adoption, policy implementation and policy evaluation, with feedback mechanisms among these stages as depicted in Figure 4.1.

For the education policy, the government aims to drive a modern economy, to create markets and entrepreneurship opportunities and to generate values that build the nation. The key here is to construct a policy in a way that such impacts are achieved, taking into consideration the micro- and macro-environments of the policy. The policy inquiry (process/analysis) must be supported with evidence so that informed decisions are made during “policy formulation”.



**Figure 4.1: The Heuristic Stages of Public Policy Making**

Source: (Helbig et al, 2015)

The policy problems are often unstructured and messy. Furthermore, there are two major possible sources of misconceptions in policy formulation: the judgement of public officials in making policy decisions and the idea during policy formulation that there is an ultimate best practice or one size fits all (Desai & Harlow, 2012). Consequently, policy formulation becomes a complex process. Therefore, policy decisions must be complemented with knowledge and evidence. Supporting the policy processes with evidence enables policy makers to actively explore and exploit the rich available information to support their decisions (Desouza, 2011). The notion of evidence is a phenomenon. There are still unresolved theoretical and practical issues regarding the understanding of “evidence” (Achinstein, 2010; Majone, 1989). In this paper, evidence is simply a fact supported with empirical data, not a hunch based on experiences and personal judgements alone. Therefore, evidence-based policy formulation involves the use of empirical results of quality research. Evidence-based policy-making processes involve the use of background documents to depict the policy problem and to draw scenarios of different policy solutions (Wimmer, 2011). Quality research provides evidence through trials, experiments and other scientific empirical studies. Experts/decision makers’ opinions become like any other source of information if not backed by evidence.

The use of evidence in public policy making demonstrates the clear link between policy decisions and research, which is often lacking. A gap in the uptake of research by policy makers is well documented in literature - see for example Lomas (2007) and Van Egmond et al (2011). Van Egmond et al. stress the need for research-policy partnerships that involve intense interactions between researchers and policy makers to produce evidence for policy purposes. Furthermore, in policy formulation, evidence produced by research is context dependent, which is an important aspect to be considered. The policy decisions must be contextualised even if some experiences are drawn from international experiences (Mkude, 2016). Using evidence and contextualising policy decisions enables uncertainty to be predicted and understood, in most instances, through scenarios (Wimmer, 2011).

In the chosen example of a free education policy, uncertainties include the influx of new students, availability of teachers, availability of classrooms and teaching facilities, and the government's financial commitment to implement the policy. Research and evidence, in this regard, could play a key role in making decisions regarding policy formulation and the modality of policy implementation in a sustainable way. Evidence and scenarios developed during policy formulation could provide policy makers with a set of potential actions that would give policy makers results that maximise utility and take into consideration the effect on and the potential roles of different stakeholders involved. If there is a high level of uncertainty, it becomes extremely difficult to make decisions even when the policy problem or agenda has somewhat well-defined parameters (Desai & Harlow, 2012). "Effective policy decision-making is based on [objective] evidence embedded in an argument that connects the evidence to decision and action claims necessary to address the policy issue" (Desai & Harlow, 2012). However, it is important to distinguish that evidence informs, and does not determine, the policy decisions and actions.

Evidence-based public policy making has long been used by governments in different countries. The following section briefly provides an overview of the use of evidence in public policy making. The aim of the section is to highlight the significance of the approach.

### **International Experiences in Evidence-based Public Policy Making**

Below is a case story about evidence-based public policy making. The case was selected based on the international collaborative research

carried out (Helbig et al, 2015). The main goal of the case is to highlight the use of evidence in public policy making. The context of the case is described, as are the types of evidence used and the stages of policy making process in which the evidence was used.

### **Case: Renewable energy policy for Kosice, Slovakia**

“The process of developing an energy policy in Kosice self-governing region (KSR) in Slovakia is surrounded by political, economic and environmental challenges. High dependency on imported energy from Russia and Ukraine, presented KSR with economic and political vulnerabilities. The emergence of domestic small to medium enterprises (SMEs) within the energy sector has provided new opportunities for employment and new technologies for utilising local energy sources. Control of energy production with respect to emissions also impacted the policy making environment. Any change in the sources of energy would likely directly affect citizens and businesses, government entities, energy importing companies, local SMEs, and citizens.”

The project focused on capturing the views of different stakeholders and provided evidence on different renewable energy generation alternatives. Evidence was first constructed through stakeholders' views, desk research of available documentation and empirical research.

The collective evidence was then used to generate evidence-based scenarios for different alternative solutions. The scenarios were developed collaboratively among the stakeholders. Scenario building is a policy analysis technique that provides alternative policy choices by depicting the uncertainties and interdependencies that may potentially have impacts (Bishop et al., 2007; Mietzner & Reger, 2005; Postma & Liebl, 2005). The use of evidence to generate scenarios was the main emphasis of the exercise. Therefore, it was important to provide the stakeholders with the necessary knowledge of the policy problem. Conceptual modelling transformed stakeholder-generated scenarios and evidence into formal policy models for simulation and then transformed the model-based scenarios into narrative scenarios to enable understanding of simulation results for stakeholders and steer further collaboration on the results. This process was iterative, as new scenarios emerging from the discussions of results could be evaluated and simulated again. The model-based scenarios are useful to inform the stakeholders and policy makers on the simulated impacts of their choices and to enable them to evaluate the simulation outcomes and hence stimulate further discussions on policy alternatives (Wimmer, et al., 2012). The final scenario was the “evidence-based scenario for

policy choice". The added value of the project in Kosice was policy makers' added confidence about the expected outcomes of a policy in respect of the stakeholders involved (Helbig et al., 2015). Moreover, "the stakeholder engagement process in Kosice was positively viewed by the stakeholders themselves. It enabled better understanding of the policy problem through background documents provided in the platform, and it also provided a tool where different stakeholders' views and expectations could be explicitly captured" (Helbig et al., 2015).

At each stage of policy formulation, the stakeholder makes an argument to defend the choices being made, and brings in information to support the arguments in the generated scenario. In the instance of a free education policy, for instance, each stakeholder provides evidence for the sustainability of the policy and how it is to be implemented. For example, such evidence will include how the government will sustain the policy financially, and the availability of teachers and facilities/infrastructure to accommodate the potential new influx of students. A simulation allows exploration of different policy choices and strategies generated in scenarios that would produce different types of information for addressing the implementation and sustainability of the free education policy. The use of evidence ensures the legitimacy of policy decisions taken by the policy makers.

## **Discussion and Recommendations**

The previous section illustrated an experience from Kosice in the use of evidence in public policy making. The case illustrated that for a public policy such as renewable energy policy, the policy making process is very complex and filled with uncertainties. Furthermore, it illustrated that in any policy, there are stakeholders who have different, yet diverse, stakes in the outcome of policy making. The example of free education policy also illustrated such complexity and how the use of evidence and scenarios could inform decision makers. In Tanzania, along the policy lifecycle, the free education policy is in implementation stage. However, feedback can already be collected to inform the policy makers on the choices made during policy formulation and adoption. Such feedback, from empirical research, can rightfully serve as evidence to inform decision makers.

Effective public policy decision-making must be grounded in evidence that is embedded in an argument. Such effectiveness will lead to policy decisions and actions that address policy issues.

Therefore, evidence is used to explain the policy problem and to predict results (and unexpected results). Evidence and other documentation are also used to educate stakeholders on policy problems, alternatives and expected results/outcomes. From these assertions, key recommendations are provided to public policy makers:

1. Use stakeholder analysis methods to identify the key stakeholders of a given policy. Involve the stakeholders in problem framing, policy analysis, and decision-making.
2. Identify the necessary evidence required to build the baseline of the policy agenda/problem. Also, ensure that all the stakeholders have a shared understanding of “evidence”. The necessary evidence should be identified at each stage of the public policy lifecycle.
3. Using evidence and other documents, involve the stakeholders in generating different scenarios and alternative solutions during policy formulation. The stakeholder-generated scenarios should comprehensively cover the evidence used to generate the scenarios, the expected results/outcomes of the scenarios and the associated benefits and challenges if the policy is implemented.
4. Employ advanced technology and modelling tools to generate model-based scenarios, which will serve as the ultimate evidence in policy formulation.
5. Adopt the policy based on the model-based scenario, which depicts the uncertainties, benefits and challenges if the policy is adopted. Constant feedback is necessary to build up evidence for future implementation of the policies.
6. Evaluation is of paramount importance in implementing the evidence-based public policies. Feedback from the evaluation should be used to improve the implementation actions.

Following the recommendations provided above, the following section concludes this research paper.

## **Conclusion**

Education from higher education institutions has a big role in industrialisation and economic development. Governments and higher education institutions must realise this relationship in order to take full advantage. This paper introduced the concept of evidence-based public policy making. The use of objective evidence in public policy making reduces the uncertainty of policy choices, improves the

accuracy of individual expectations around policy choices and provides a better understanding of the policy to all stakeholders.

The case reviewed in this paper used an active approach to identify and involve stakeholders in collaborative policy making processes. The case illustrated the significance of using evidence in public policy making, especially where the policy is complex and involves diverse stakeholders. Through the illustrated case, the paper explored the concept of evidence-based public policy making.

The paper at hand is only exploratory. Further research is planned to investigate public policy making in Tanzania, where the methods, tools and approaches will be investigated. Future research will also include an assessment study to determine the application of evidence-based public policy making in Tanzania.

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## CHAPTER 5

# **New Education Policy, New Curriculum and New Government (5<sup>th</sup> phase): Opportunities and Challenges in Early Childhood Education in Tanzania**

*Fortidas Bakuza*

### **Abstract**

In 2014 the government of Tanzania developed the Education and Training Policy 2014. The policy replaced the Education and Training Policy 1995. In the new policy, as it was in the previous one, Early Childhood Education (pre-primary education) is recognised as part of formal basic education. In 2016 the government, through the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Vocation, developed the Pre- primary Education Curriculum and Syllabus. This document translates education objectives in Early Childhood Education. This is the first time the government has issued a curriculum and syllabus in one document which provides the teachers the opportunity to see both documents. In 2015, after the general election, the new government (5th phase) announced 'fee-free' education from primary education to secondary education. Although pre-primary education was not clearly stated in the fee-free education, it is included because the policy recognises it as the first stage of basic education in Tanzania.



The new policy, the new curriculum and the 5th phase government in place provide opportunities for the improvement of teaching and learning environment in pre-primary education, which is a foundation level preparing young children for primary education. However, there are structural, leadership and human resource challenges in the interpretation of the policy and government directives to realise the improved quality and access to Early Childhood Education as a sector for all eligible children throughout Tanzania. Issues discussed in the paper are not exhaustive of opportunities and challenges in realisation of improved teaching learning environments in Early Childhood Education in the era of globalisation.

**Key words:** *education policy, curriculum, government, and early childhood education*

## Introduction

Early Childhood Education (ECE) is considered the foundation of formal education in most countries and therefore it is an area that requires leadership specialisation based on the importance of this level and the age of children served. In 2014 the government of Tanzania developed the Education and Training Policy (ETP) 2014 that replaced the ETP 1995. In the new policy, ECE (pre-primary education) has remained recognised as part of formal basic education. Specifically, the ETP 2014 states that objectives targeting ECE include:

- To reinforce and enhance holistic development of a child's personality physically, mentally, spiritually and socially.
- To provide the opportunities for the child to develop his/her skills in communication, numeracy and other skills that will prepare him/her for primary education.

In 2016, the government, through the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Vocation, developed the Pre-primary Education Curriculum and Syllabus. This document translates education objectives in ECE. This is the first time the government has issued a curriculum and syllabus in one document which provides the teachers the opportunity to see both documents.

In 2015, after the general election, the new government (5th phase) announced 'fee-free' education from primary education to secondary education. Although pre-primary education was not specifically identified as falling under the fee-free policy it is included because the policy recognises it as the first stage of basic education in Tanzania.

The new policy, the new curriculum and the 5th phase government in place provide opportunities for the improvement of the teaching and learning environment in pre-primary education, which is a foundation level preparing young children for primary education. However, there are structural, leadership and human resource challenges in the interpretation of the policy and government directives to realise the improved quality and access to ECE as a sector for all eligible children throughout Tanzania.

This paper takes the position that ECE should be viewed as a specialised sector and that the slow development and other challenges facing ECE as a sector are associated with (mis)perceptions, structural factors and the leadership skills of people who should make decisions on resources and skills to improve the quality of care and education of young children, especially those who need it most. Issues discussed in the paper are not exhaustive of opportunities and challenges in realisation of improved teaching learning environments in ECE in the era of globalisation.

### **Policy Context in Tanzania- Background**

ECE in Tanzania has been the priority of the government for decades now. In 1982, the Presidential Commission on Education recommended the government introduce a “pre-primary teacher education programme” (URT, 1995). In 1995 the government developed the ETP, and ECE was recognised as the first step of basic education. Among many objectives of pre-primary education, the policy stated that the pre-primary education in Tanzania was “to encourage and promote the overall personality development of the child, that is, his or her physical, mental, moral and social characteristics and capabilities”(URT, 1995: 3). Unfortunately the government did not aim at the inception of the policy to make pre-primary education compulsory, as it states in the following:

“While taking cognizance of the fact that pre-school education is very important, it does not appear economically feasible to formalize and systematize the entire pre-school education for this age group”(URT, 1995: 2-3).

I think the discrepancies in the implementation of pre-primary education in public schools was because the policy recognised the importance of pre-primary education yet left its implementation in the hands of “parents, local communities and non-governmental agencies” (URT, 1995). Therefore, pre-primary education was implemented in public primary schools but the quality of the education provided and

services depended on head teachers and education officials at the local government. In 2000 the government introduced the Primary Education Development Program to improve access, quality of teaching and resources. All schools received capitation grants based on the number of children enrolled in grade one to grade seven. Pre-primary education was left out of capitation grant allocations.

The introduction of the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP/MKUKUTA) in 2004-2006 made significant improvements in sector development. ECE was included but it was never considered in resource allocations. Since 1995 all public primary schools were required to establish a pre-primary class for 5- and 6-year old children to prepare them for grade one. Para-professional or primary school teachers who had no prior training in ECE taught most pre-primary classes. Despite the recommendation for the establishment of a pre-primary teacher training programme in 1982, there were no specialised teacher training courses for pre-primary teachers until 2014. ECE courses were mainstreamed in pre-service teacher training courses. Therefore, national government reports, especially Basic Education Statistics, indicated the slow increase in enrolment in pre-primary almost every year (Mtahabwa, 2010; URT, 2012; Bakuza, 2014). However, it should be emphasised that pre-primary education in Tanzania was impliedly compulsory but it never got attention, especially in resource allocation, both human and financial.

### **The New Education and Training Policy 2014**

The ETP 2014 not only recognises pre-primary education as an important stage but also makes it compulsory. It is looking at taking Tanzania into the 21st century with emphasis on the preparation of its citizens in the global economy. The overall objective of the ETP 2014 (2014: 20) is: “To have educated Tanzanians who have knowledge and skills to be able to quickly contribute to the national development in a competitive environment.” Specific objectives include having in place:

- Systems, structure and enabling (‘nyumbufu’) procedures to enable Tanzanians to progress in different routes of professions and qualifications
- Supervision and effective management of education and training in the country
- An education and training system that is inclusive and sensitive to crosscutting issues.

The ETP 2014 (2014: 28) has clear directions on curriculum and states that in order to achieve the overall objective, there is a need to “have curricula that are effective, comprehensive and which meet the needs of the labour market”. This commitment is reflected in the policy statement:

“The government, in collaboration with stakeholders, will ensure that curricula observe the basic skills of communication, reading, writing and counting; research; analyse data, interpret, evaluate and use the knowledge, innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship at all levels of education and training.”

It is important to emphasise that the government has always recognised the need to collaborate with stakeholders in the implementation of education policy and programs. However, unlike in the previous policy, the ETP 2014 (2014: 24) clearly states, “pre-primary is compulsory and it will be provided to all children aged between 3 years old to 5 years old for the period of not less than one year”. The policy also emphasises that, “every child whose age is between 4 and 5 years who has gone through pre-primary education, according to the law, should be allowed to primary education”.

The development of the ETP 2014 was followed by its implementation strategy. In response to the ETP 2014 the government developed a new ECE curriculum and syllabus in 2016. The document is intended for young children of 5 years old and it is for all children, including those with special needs. According to the ETP 2014, children 3 and 4 years old can join ECE if teachers will assess and approve their readiness. Despite the good intention of the government, there will be a need for establishment of assessment mechanisms, which teachers will use to assess child “readiness”. If there is no mechanism and uniform assessment, some children will be forced to read and write at a young age even when they are not ready to go to primary education.

The ETP 2014 has clearly indicated that pre-primary education is compulsory, as stated above, and it has set out specific objectives which aim at holistic development, physically, mentally, socially and emotionally. The ECE curriculum and syllabus that were developed in 2016 identified a number of specific objectives that include:

- To enhance the child’s ability to learn by doing.
- To equip a child with early literacy skills.
- To enhance creativity and thinking skills.
- To identify children with special needs.

These specific objectives needed to be translated into the curriculum and later the syllabus to be implemented in classes. The next section is addressing the new curriculum and syllabus of 2016.

### **The New Pre-Primary Curriculum and Syllabus 2016**

In order to realise these specific objectives, the curriculum and syllabus for pre-primary education in Tanzania have identified six competences, which all children will be expected to gain during their pre-primary education. These competences are: Relating to each other, Communicating, Caring for health, Caring for environment, Mastering artistic skills, and Understanding mathematical concepts. The implementation of the new curriculum in pre-primary classes suggests the pedagogical shift from a subject-based curriculum to competence-based curriculum. The shift also will require all teachers to be trained on new approaches. New techniques, resources and assessment measures will be required to effectively meet the intended outcomes of the new policy and the new curriculum and syllabus.

### **New Government (5th Phase)**

Since the 5th phase government came to power in 2015, a lot has happened in the education sector in Tanzania and a lot is going on. The government has laid down its commitment to provide 'fee-free education' for basic education (Grades 1-7) and lower secondary education. The government announcement of fee-free education has come with government commitment to provide capitation grants to all children from Grade One to junior secondary education. It is noted with appreciation that since the 5th phase government came into power there has been constant distribution of the capitation grant in all schools. There are issues of the amount disbursed in relation to the needs but at least the schools can expect the allocation to arrive in time. Schools have reported increased enrolment (in some cases beyond the capacity of the schools). There have also been some misinterpretations of the government announcement of fee-free education. Parents withdrew from direct contribution to education because they thought the government would provide for everything, including school uniforms and scholastic materials.

### **The Reality against ECE Needs**

Schools across the country have reported the high enrolment and therefore the children to teacher ratio is very high. Teaching and learning

materials are in high demand. Teacher training is not matching the increased demand and schools. There are limited or lack of professional trainings on alternative approaches and management of large class sizes. Very unfortunately, ECE is not part of fee-free education and therefore it is not included in the capitation grant allocation. The situation is not good in many pre-primary schools because most schools had employed paraprofessionals and parents were responsible for the wages. Since schools cannot collect any contributions due to the fee-free education announcement, many paraprofessionals have dropped out of teaching, leaving the burden to the few primary teachers who are already struggling with increased enrolment in Grade One.

### **Growing Disparities**

Despite the government efforts to increase access to all children, especially now with fee-free education, there are growing disparities in access to education services in Tanzania. There are disparities based on geographical locations, also referred to as urban and rural disparities. There are more schools available to urban communities compared to rural ones. The more distant you are from the centre the poorer the education services you are likely to get. There are more teachers in urban primary schools compared to rural primary schools. Even the number of primary schools is higher in urban compared to rural areas. In rural areas many children are still walking long distances to and from school. There are children who have no access to primary school, due to long distances.

Another form of disparity is between public and private schools. The quality of ECE is quite different between public institutions and private institutions. Since parents of children in private schools are paying school fees, the private schools attract good teachers and have better material supply compared to public pre-primary schools. The income of the family determines the kind of services.

### **Opportunities for Partnership**

It is evident that the new development of policy, the curriculum and syllabus, and the government commitment to provide fee-free education, have created opportunities for new education direction as a country. On the other hand, these opportunities have come with challenges that will need to be addressed before the intended outcomes are attained. It is important for the government to play its role but as the ETP 2014 suggests, there is a need to seek the collaboration of all education stakeholders.

There are many opportunities for partnership in different areas. In ECE there is growing interest from different stakeholders in working with the government in areas of: research, professional development programs, curriculum review and exchange. Therefore, the government should embrace these opportunities to address the challenges in ECE.

## Conclusion

The new policy, new curriculum and new 5th phase government in Tanzania, together, offer a new opportunity to improve and invest in wider access and better quality education in public education. However, the ETP 2014 and the curriculum and syllabus in pre-primary education will only prepare young children as intended if deliberate efforts are made to include pre-primary education in all government programs and budget development and resource allocations. There is a need for adequate and well-trained teachers to teach at pre-primary education level and well-trained leaders to translate policy, curriculum and guidelines for the intended outcomes. Schools need allocation of capitation grants clearly targeting pre-primary education. Due to the specific needs of these lower levels of education, the government should work with other stakeholders to develop a national ECE program.

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## CHAPTER 6

# Making the Link: Integrating Design Thinking, Making and STEMx in Education

*Wachira Nicholas and Susan Crichton*

### Overview

Globally, educators are embracing *Making* as both a pedagogical approach and an area of study. *Making* requires students to physically design and build, allowing them to take abstract concepts and make personal, tangible meaning, using design, tools, materials and collaborative discussion. *Making* encourages student-centred, active learning. It develops resilience, curiosity, and self-empowerment through wrestling with ideas, and engaging in problem solving and finding. In challenging contexts, such as rural Tanzania where this research is situated, teachers typically lack access to quality professional development (PD), resources and opportunities to experience pedagogical innovations.

This paper proposes an approach, *Taking Making into Schools*, that disrupts existing teaching practice. It integrates subject areas such as Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and human-centred Design (STEMx).



## Introduction

Education is both a goal and a catalyst for social and economic development. The importance of education is reflected in its inclusion in the United Nation's (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). One of the MDGs is to achieve universal primary education by ensuring "that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike will be able to complete a full course of primary education" (UN, 2015). Further, the MDGs confirm that education is instrumental in the achievement of the other MDGs, recognising that "educating children gives the next generation the tools to fight poverty and prevent disease, including malaria and AIDS" (UN, 2015).

Sadly, an assessment of the UN MDGs' gains made so far indicates that the world has not achieved the 2015 goal of universal primary education. Admittedly, there have been significant gains in access, but it has become evident that learning outcomes and relevance of the education are even more crucial in order for education to contribute to development. It is not enough for children to attend school; they must be given quality opportunities to learn when they are there.

The next stage of the UN development drive is the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs recognise the need for each country to focus on the specific challenges it needs to overcome so as to attain contextually relevant and sustainable development (UN, 2014). We see the pedagogy of Making as a natural fit for schools as it links innovation, creativity, problem finding and problem solving in relation to the needs of particular contexts. If the children we are educating today are to tackle the problems of tomorrow, they need to know how to design and make substantive, sustainable change in an increasingly complex and globalised world. Children need access to active learning environments that challenge them to think creatively and critically and make meaning that is personally relevant and valued.

While education has been touted as key to positive transformation of the individual and the community, it can only attain this function if it is delivered in the right way. As observed earlier, the mind-numbing repetitive actions of teacher-centred delivery do not necessarily result in learning. Teaching and listening do not automatically result in learning. Transformative learning requires active learning where the learners modify their meaning schemes by critically reflecting on their experiences. A first step is to create a conducive learning environment that allows the learners to experience, critically reflect, and make

meaning of their experience. Making has been shown to lead to active learning that is transformative.

Making in the school context presents a great opportunity for transformative learning where the learners can critically contemplate issues in their context. They engage in inquiry and articulate what they perceive as issues worth addressing. Through dialogue, they empathetically negotiate solutions and design and create solutions. Throughout this process, the learner takes a lead in the activity while the teacher facilitates and offers guidance through informally assessing progress. Both the teacher and the learners learn from the process and articulate their understanding by co-designing and co-creating solutions. This learning can be well documented through the steps carried out and also evidenced in the solutions created.

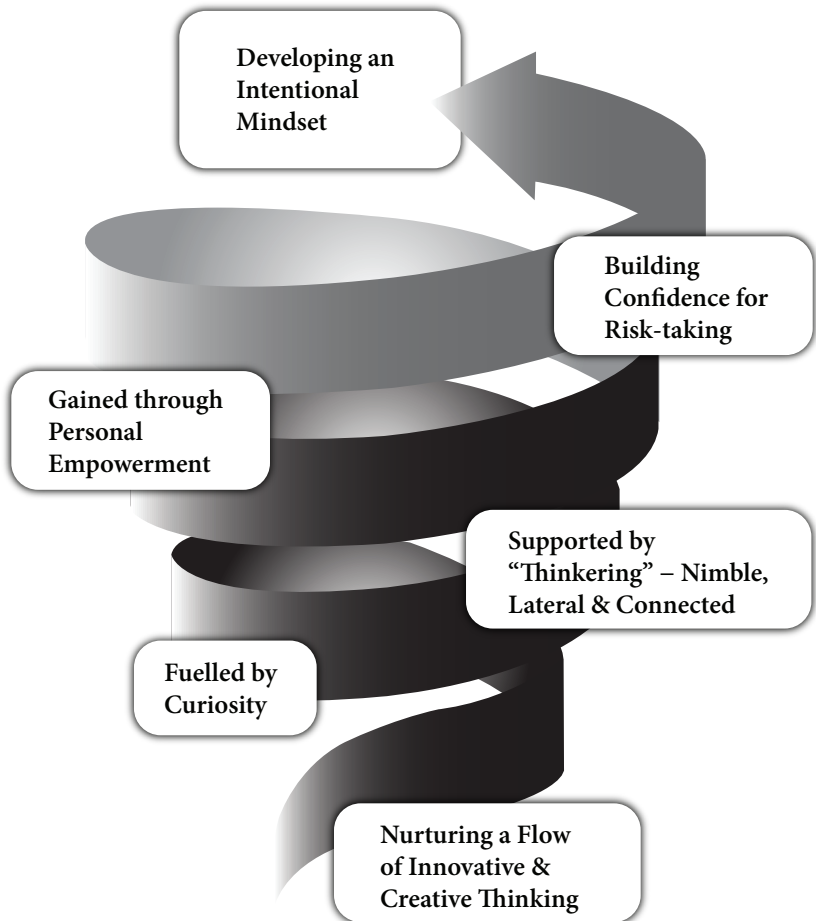
Context is an important parameter in determining what constitutes quality education. While the general parameters are global, the details are context-dependent. As such, ideas about achieving quality education have to be contextualised so as to be successful. As stated in Section I, challenging contexts are everywhere. Making has been successfully experienced in various educational contexts, including challenging contexts (i.e., aboriginal reserves in Canada, rural villages in Tanzania). In these contexts, the general process remains the same – emphasising the design thinking process and making. In many settings, a dedicated maker space has been created to enable teachers to come together and imagine the future of education by reflectively engaging in design thinking and innovatively creating resources to respond to pedagogical challenges in their context (Please see Section IX and X for suggestions). Making together helps build teachers' capacity to imagine and implement educational reform. It also allows them to share best practices and great ideas.

When teachers begin taking making into their classrooms, they must foster an intentional mindset that includes designing, making, engagement and curiosity. The Toolkit for Challenging Contexts: Taking Making into Schools offers suggestions for facilitating immersive professional learning experiences for teachers so they can experience the value of design and making before they introduce it to their students. You can obtain a copy of that toolkit from [https://issuu.com/ubcedo/docs/toolkit4cc\\_englishandhttps://issuu.com/ubcedo/docs/toolkit4cc\\_kiswahili](https://issuu.com/ubcedo/docs/toolkit4cc_englishandhttps://issuu.com/ubcedo/docs/toolkit4cc_kiswahili)).

Once teachers are comfortable with making, they can introduce similar immersive experiences to their students, helping them to

develop intentional mindsets. By embedding making across curricular areas, teachers create opportunities for students to experience making to nurture innovative and creative thinking through design and tinkering. The resources shared in Section IX are provided to help teachers imagine what locally developed resources for challenging contexts might look like and how to make them.

**Figure 5.1: Experiences that Foster an Intentional Mindset**



Introducing students to quality learning resources and then facilitating them through a *design phase* allows students to be encouraged to nurture innovative, divergent, and creative thinking. Design thinking and quality resources prompt curiosity and help students to think laterally and find connections amongst ideas generated by others. Teachers must be intentional in their development and use of resources if they are to move beyond teacher centred, direct instruction. If the resources are developed for the teachers' use, little will change in the pedagogy and the learning will remain passive rather than active.

The quality resources can be used to nurture the flow of innovative and creative thinking in students, thereby stimulating their curiosity.

The graphic below illustrates the recursive nature of experiences needed to build an intentional mindset. When students and teachers have an intentional mindset, they know why and what they are learning and they can begin to explore and take risks. It is with an intentional mindset that a growth mindset is developed!

### **An Introduction to Active Learning, Making and Challenging Contexts**

When we *Take Making into Schools*, we invite our students to actively participate in the act of learning by designing and building meaning, using real materials and tools. Making requires students to actively engage in the learning process and touch, play, use, reuse, and explore resources and materials. These tangible learning activities support and reinforce the core concepts and ideas that are being taught.

Making in classrooms is a natural way to learn. Making is both an instructional strategy and content to be learned. Making allows students to celebrate the best gifts of humanity - the ability to think wisely, work creatively, and share generously. For teachers, Making is a meaningful way to introduce Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Design (STEMx) into existing curricular activities. In the case of Tanzania it provides a natural way to blend the 3Rs (Reading, Writing and Arithmetic) into learning.

In Tanzania, teachers are required to use active learning strategies to teach the three Rs. Like in any other context, teaching and learning resources form part of the teachers' pedagogical strategy aimed at fostering the quality of learning. In recognition that students cannot learn from one resource all the time, that different knowledge will demand different resources and that resources should deeply engage students in

their learning, teachers spend a lot of time and effort thinking about and developing resources. The difficulty in many classrooms in challenging contexts is that there are few, if any, materials and resources for the students to engage with when they are trying to learn new concepts, ideas or content. We suggest that teachers can create locally relevant, low-cost or no-cost resources that students can use. When students use tangible items to learn with, there is tangible evidence that learning has occurred, and teachers can see where gaps in teaching and learning have occurred. Making integrates curricular concepts and ideas, including the 3Rs, with imagination and creativity and problem finding and problem solving. Making helps to improve the quality of a child's educational experience. Teachers know that context helps to determine what constitutes quality education. While issues such as equitable access to education for all and literacy and numeracy are global, some issues are contextually dependent, especially in challenging contexts.

Challenging contexts in education exist everywhere. They can be found in urban slums, remote rural villages, harsh geographically complicated regions, socially disadvantaged locations, or economically disadvantaged areas. They can be found in urban and rural settings. They are found in the global north as well as the global south. Challenges can be a combination of issues that make it difficult for teachers and learners to experience quality education. Some of these issues include high population, diverse learner abilities in a class, low literacy levels, lack of resources, serious underfunding, lack of professional learning opportunities, lack of enough qualified teachers, and many other related things. Such contexts render access to quality education more difficult, but not impossible. In fact, these issues could provide an opportunity to actualize transformative learning where educators are able to respond to the needs of individual students and the local society in the absence of external solutions that may be ill suited to the context. Our work with educators suggests that sometimes it is in the most challenging environments that educators have the most freedom and opportunity to be innovative and act creatively as they seek to improve the quality of education, given the difficult circumstances they operate in, typically without the pressure of observation by external bodies or agencies.

### **Active Learning Matters**

Governments mandate their teachers and stakeholders to help students develop the skills necessary to be successful in an ever-changing, globalised world. Teachers are told that these skills must be situated in

accessible, flexible learning environments, but rarely are teachers given glimpses of what these learning environments might look like or offered practical suggestions for how they might create resources to develop them in their own classroom contexts. Teachers are told that students must become active learners and that engaging in rote, teacher-directed learning does not work, but rarely are teachers provided with ideas and opportunities to make the resources required to support active learning.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) describes high quality learning environments as being:

- Learner-centred with significant, yet different, roles for teachers
- Structured and well-designed, requiring a high degree of professionalism to support the student inquiry and autonomous learning.
- Profoundly personalised and acutely sensitive to individual and group differences and offering tailored, timely teacher feedback for learners.
- Inclusive so as to be empathetic and sensitive to individual and group differences.
- Social so learners can work collaboratively in group settings and connect to their larger community (OECD, 2011).

Currently, there is almost no limit to the amount of information we can get. We can download a version of the sum of human knowledge, in the form of Wikipedia, offline onto our phones, tablets or computers (<http://www.labnol.org/software/download-wikipedia-offline/20012/>). Because we can access information so easily, we need our students to be able to think with the information, build personal knowledge, and make meaning for themselves. Basic literacy (how to read, write, do simple arithmetic, and recite information) is not enough; fluency (why, when, and how to use literacy creatively and make meaning) is essential. We have the potential to learn, both formally and informally, at any time, place or in any format we need. Learning opportunities have probably never been more flexible. We can upgrade our skills using information we can get using a range of devices (i.e. mobile phones, tablets, computers). For example, we can improve our Calculus skills with help from Khan Academy (<https://www.khanacademy.org/>), or learn to build a sustainable and inexpensive water filter ([www.cawst.org](http://www.cawst.org)), or design a solar water heater (<http://www.iwilltry.org/b/projects/build-a-simple-solar-water-heater/>). Information and facts can be gained from many sources, but good thinking needs to be developed. Therefore, teachers

must develop ways in which students can actively engage with ideas, concepts and content and make their learning visible in tangible and thoughtful ways.

We all enjoy Making. It is in our DNA. It stems from our curiosity about the world and our basic desire to make things and then make those things better. Our earliest ancestors led the way in making when they crafted the first hand tools in Africa and experimented with fire. They continued to make things and make those things better as they adapted to new locations and migrated around the world. In recent years, people around the world have forgotten our love affair with making and moved away from traditional ways of doing things, often opting for cheaper, imported goods that appeared to be better and more modern.

While education has been touted as key to positive transformation of the individual and the community, it can only attain this function if it is delivered in the right way. We now know that the mind numbing, repetitive practices of teacher-centred delivery do not necessarily result in learning. Teaching and listening do not automatically result in learning. In many of our schools in East Africa, more than 40% of our students do not continue their studies beyond primary education because they lose interest because of traditional pedagogical practices that makes them passive learners and because the teaching lacks applicability in their daily lives and the careers they envisage. "...In 2013, nation-wide research was conducted to assess Standard II pupils' competence in the 3Rs. The intention of the assessment was to determine the pupils' ability in those basic skills. Results of the study revealed that there was an acutely low level of skills for pupils in the 3Rs" (MoESTV, 2016).

Transforming our teaching and learning requires teachers to think of ways in which students can actively engage with their learning. A first step is to create a conducive learning environment that allows the learners to design and experience, critically reflect, and make meaning of their experience. Teaching and making can lead to active learning that would be transformative.

Making in the school context presents a great opportunity for transformative learning because the learners can critically contemplate issues in their context. They engage in questioning and exploring, learning to articulate what they perceive are issues worth addressing. Through dialogue, they empathetically negotiate solutions and design and create solutions. Throughout this process, learners can take the lead in the activity while the teacher facilitates and offers guidance through informally assessing progress. Both the teacher and the learners learn

from the process, articulating their understanding by co-designing and co-creating solutions. This learning can be well documented through the steps carried out and also evidenced in the solutions created.

Making, the act of designing and building, has been successfully experienced in various contexts, including challenging contexts (i.e., aboriginal reserves in Canada, rural villages in Tanzania). As stated previously, the key concern associated with changing educational practices is to ensure learners are not just attending school but that they are actually learning. Teachers must become more motivated to spend more time in the classroom teaching and there should be evidence-based results. Making helps with this process as the teachers and learner are active and energised to learn together. When the students make things, their thinking is visible and evidence of learning is available. The act of making helps to build the teachers' capacity to imagine and implement education under such initiatives, as it draws from local resources and traditional ways of knowing and being.

### **Making and Design Thinking**

Making is an excellent way of providing evidence of the cognitive processes that occur during learning. Making requires teachers and students to actively design and build meaning using low-cost or no-cost materials and resources. The first step in making is the design thinking process.

“Design thinking is generally considered the ability to combine empathy for the context of a problem, creativity in the generation of insights and solutions, and rationality to analyse and fit solutions to the context” (Wikipedia, n.d.). It is the human centred design process that considers the user rather than solely the problem or potential product or outcome.

Design thinking is a significant part of making. We have observed that if teachers or students are given a problem to solve, they tend to rush to a solution without considering all the confounding variables and potential solutions. They often make what they already know and miss the opportunity to innovate and be creative.

Design thinking allows us to share our views about particular issues and, through dialogue, expand our ideas. Dialogue reveals our thinking about considered alternatives. Design thinking is a process by which we can ‘thinker’ (think and tinker) and learn to play purposefully. It allows us to talk collaboratively within groups while considering, discussing, researching, and exploring options. This is often called



lateral thinking, or the kind of thinking that tends to foster creativity and innovation.

Design thinking aligns nicely with Making by helping makers consider what they would like to create and what might be needed. The process of design thinking involves a series of decisions and activities that inform the designer. Good design is encapsulated in ten principles (Vitsoe, 2013). They include:

Table 6.1: Principles of Good Design

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good design is innovative</li><li>• Good design makes a product useful</li><li>• Good design is aesthetic</li><li>• Good design makes a product understandable</li><li>• Good design is unobtrusive</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good design is honest</li><li>• Good design is long-lasting</li><li>• Good design is thorough, down to the last detail</li><li>• Good design is environmentally friendly</li><li>• Good design is as little design as possible.</li></ul> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Design thinking is a process for solving problems, and it typically consists of seven steps: *define*, *research*, *ideate*, *prototype*, *choose*, *implement*, and *learn*.

Table 6.2: Design Thinking Process

| Define                                                                                                                                                                                         | Research                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Ideation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Prototype                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Decide what issue you are trying to resolve</li><li>• Agree on who the audience is</li><li>• Determine what will make the project successful</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review the history of the issue; try to determine why is it a problem</li><li>• Collect / share examples of other attempts to solve the same issue</li><li>• Talk with people who share or who have encountered this problem</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify the needs and motivations of users</li><li>• Generate as many ideas as possible to serve these identified needs</li><li>• Sketch ideas</li><li>• Do not judge ideas</li><li>• During brainstorming, have one conversation / interview at a time</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Combine, expand, and refine ideas</li><li>• Create multiple drafts</li><li>• Seek feedback from a diverse group of people</li><li>• Share your prototype with others</li><li>• Reserve judgment and maintain neutrality</li><li>• Create and present actual working prototype(s)</li></ul> |

| Choose                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Implement                                                                                                                             | Learn                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review the objective</li><li>• Set aside emotion and ownership of ideas</li><li>• Avoid consensus thinking</li><li>• Remember: the most practical solution isn't always the best</li><li>• Select the powerful ideas</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make sample descriptions</li><li>• Execute</li><li>• Test your idea with your users</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gather feedback from the user(s)</li><li>• Determine if the solution met its goals</li><li>• Discuss what could be improved</li><li>• Measure success; collect data</li><li>• Document</li></ul> |

Although design is always subject to personal taste, design thinkers share a common set of values that drive innovation: these values are mainly creativity, ambidextrous thinking, teamwork, end-user focus, curiosity (Wikipedia, n.d.).

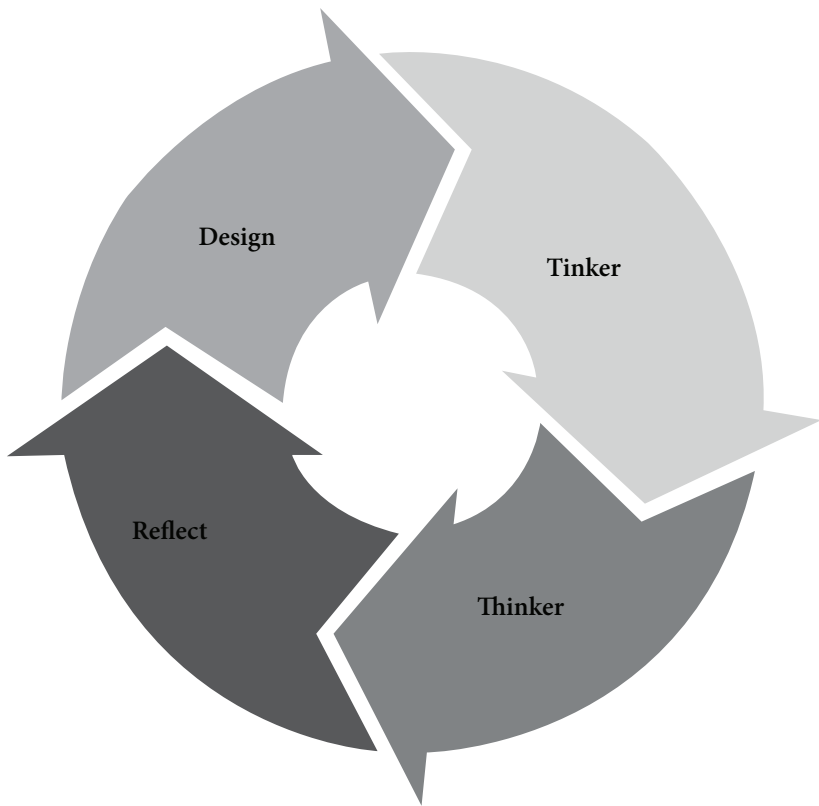
Increasingly, teachers are called upon to be designers of learning experiences. This is a shift from their previous roles as implementers or interpreters of curriculum. A good way to incorporate design thinking in the classroom is to use it to help students intentionally find linkages between authentic learning experiences and curricular problems.

Because of its emphasis on empathy, design thinking invites teachers and students to focus on human centred design and think about things worth considering. It aligns nicely with STEMx projects grounded in improving the human experience. Globally, teachers should incorporate the process of creative thinking – imagine, create, play, share, reflect (Resnick, 2007) – in their practices, as it reflects how children learn outside formal educational settings such as school. Typically, they learn through play and exploration.

**An Introduction to Classroom Design Thinking**

Taking Making into Classrooms can be conceptualized as a four-phase approach. Each part is critical in the fostering of the intentional mindset that embeds Making within existing curriculum and embodies it as a pedagogical orientation. By using a good resource as its prompt and extending the amount of time for tinkering and thinkering, students experience the four-phase model described below.

**Figure 6.2: Taking Making into Classrooms**



**Design** – helps students gain empathy through questioning, interviewing and primary source research. It helps students to see the value of adopting a human-centred approach to problem finding.

**Tinker** – supports making, testing, refining, failing, modifying, and trying again as part of an iterative process.

**Thinker** – encourages the observation of the work of others and the use of that understanding to tinker further, and modify and adjust one's initial ideas

**Reflect** – provides time to consider what was done, what could be done, and to muse about the process / product / next steps. Reflection is the prompt for iteration and is essential to understanding that design thinking is a process (journey), not merely a product (destination).

A good resource (see Section III) is the prompt or provocation for the Taking Making into Classrooms design process. Students consider the resource by slowly engaging in a facilitated process.

## Design<sup>48</sup>

The design phase helps students to consider a resource from a variety of perspectives and to gain empathy for why it is important to the understanding of the big idea or concept within the curriculum. By gaining empathy, students discover why the big ideas or concepts are worth spending time exploring and why their first, potentially obvious solution might not be the best. Design thinking supports a human centred approach, positioning empathy and understanding ahead of solutions and results. By itself, design thinking is an important skill for children as it allows them to see options and opportunities and design alternatives to existing situations. Design thinking allows students to

- To improve their life experiences and life chances by using their capacities and creating possibilities, and
- To make meaning by helping them to see relations and make connections between often disconnected facts / information and situations.

Design thinking, as a process, encourages students to develop an optimistic stance toward complex problems. When we introduce students to design thinking, it provides them with a way to see how things might be different and to feel that there is a way to make things and then make those things better.

Intentionally positioning design and making in schools supports Jarvis' (2007) view that "Learning is essential - indeed, like food and water are essential to the growth and development of the body, learning is an essential ingredient to the growth and development of the human person; it is one of the driving forces of human becoming and enriches human living." To design is to learn and to proactively personalise learning through an intentional process!

Design thinking is an essential tool for teachers and students to personalise their learning and make change in their actions, worldview, and sense of selves. It is an essential component in the development of emotional intelligence and resilience. Please explore Section XI where you will find three formats for leading design thinking with your classes.

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<sup>48</sup> We define design as a problem finding experience that uses the design thinking process and is typically promoted by a Design Challenge. Design precedes making (tinkering).

### **Tinker<sup>49</sup>**

Tinker is the second phase of the Taking Making into Classrooms cycle. It is through tinkering that students begin to make their thinking visible (Eisner, 1998). Tinkering is a way of engaging with resources that move the engagement beyond simple play with the object and toward purposeful play with concepts and big ideas that the resource supports. Typically, we encourage students to work in groups of four but that is an organisational issue that teachers will have to address – determining how many resources are available, etc. As students work together with the resource, they begin to think aloud about concepts and surface different ideas. When students engage in thinking aloud within a group, their classmates can engage with them as critical friends and offer support, ideas, and modifications. Thinking aloud forms a link between tinkering and thinking in the design thinking cycle as it bridges initial ideas with increasingly complicated ideas and questions. It is through tinkering that curiosity is fostered.

### **Thinker<sup>50</sup>**

Thinker is the third phase, and it helps groups to share learning and embrace the potential richness of divergent, ambidextrous thinking that multiple points of view can provide. Realising that everyone started with the same resource, thinking brings a forced stop to the tinkering and invites each group to summarise its activities – process, ideas and questions. It requires all participants to become critical friends and to learn to ask good, fair minded, open questions. Students need time to learn to be critical friends. The development of critical friends is part of developing a safe, risk-taking environment in which innovation and creativity are encouraged. We value the use of the revised Bloom's taxonomy questions as a way to introduce students to the types of questions that open conversations and encourage iteration. A couple of those questions is available in Section XI. Learning to ask good questions is an essential outcome of Design Thinking and the use of resources in classrooms.

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<sup>49</sup> We define tinkering as the actual hands-on making of things based on a design. Tinkering produces a tangible but not necessarily final prototype, model or metaphor of a solution to a design challenge.

<sup>50</sup> We define thinking as the act of viewing what other groups did with their resource and what their additional questions might be.

Table 6.3: Power Questions to Open and Sustain Dialogue

| Opening Questions                          | Clarifying Questions                         |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| What is your intention?                    | What do you mean?                            |
| What impact might this have?               | Please tell me more.                         |
|                                            | What concerns you most about this?           |
| What are some other possibilities?         | What concerns do you still have?             |
| What other ideas do you have about it?     | What more can you tell me?                   |
| Probing Questions                          | Options                                      |
| Can you give me an / another example?      | What are other possible solutions?           |
| What have you tried so far?                | What would you like to see happen next?      |
| How did that work?                         | What else could you do?                      |
| What might be missing?                     | What other opportunities are there for this? |
| Action Questions                           | Blocks                                       |
| What are your next steps?                  | What got in the way?                         |
| What are you willing to do to refine this? | What if this doesn't work, initially?        |
| What strengths do you see with this?       | What's your backup plan?                     |
| What would be helpful in assisting you?    | Are you prepared to take this further?       |

Reflect<sup>51</sup>

The reflect phase can be seen as the final phase of the design cycle or the start of iteration and re-design. It is a natural extension of the thinking process. We encourage both group reflection and individual reflection as part of the informal assessment process. Reflection helps students to make their thinking visible (Eisner, 1998) and consider what they have learned and what they need to learn next. It can be used as part of formative assessment. It helps students to document their own learning, recognising they can often be so busy in the process they forget what they actually learned. Reflection also helps with closure to using a resource, and it can be used to inform the next steps in personalised learning. However, one of the most important things reflection can do is to provide thinking time, time to consider what was

<sup>51</sup> We define reflect as the personal pause to consider one's work in light of other solutions and ideas. It is a necessary halt of the action before moving on to either a re-design or the next design challenge. It should play a significant role in the assessment process.

done and why, what were the contributions, what could be better next time, etc. Reflection is essential for iteration because it helps inform what could be done next. In terms of the design process, reflection helps students see what they designed and then make decisions as to how that design could be better.

## **Why We Need Our Students to Be Design Thinkers**

The world of work is changing. Factors including globalisation, creation of new jobs, climate change, and ways of working impact us all. Where once there was a vibrant economy in the creation of small goods and products, cheaper imported goods have replaced them. Machines and automation have taken over many low skilled jobs. These changes cause people to ask, how can we prepare our children and ourselves for an uncertain future? What will the world of work look like for youth in rural and urban settings across East Africa and beyond?

A question for educators at every grade level is how will we ensure we are educating our students to become full, proactive members with a dynamic future in which change will be among the primary constants? We know the ability to think well using a design thinking approach is essential and the ability to make tangible representations of learning and ideas is important. It is how change is made and ideas are shared.

## **Traits of a Design Thinker**

The following traits are fostered in students when they engage in design thinking and learn to use a design approach to engage with difficult concepts and ideas.

- Empathy – Ability to image the world from multiple perspectives
- Integrative thinking – Ability to exploit opposing ideas and opposing constraints to create new solutions
- Optimism – Ability to assume no matter how challenging the constraints of a given problem, at least one potential solution is better than the existing alternatives
- Experimentalism – Ability to pose questions and explore constraints in creative ways that proceed in entirely new directions
- Collaboration – Ability to work together and understand that complex problems require enthusiastic interdisciplinary collaboration (Brown, 2008)

Design thinking is a human centred design process that seeks to gain empathy for a situation by developing understanding of the concerns,

insights, lived experiences, and / or needs of others. The initial step in design thinking is gaining empathy through guided conversations with others. At the heart of good conversations are great questions – questions that are open, engaging and politely probing.

## Summary

Incorporating design thinking in teaching and learning makes students inquire into their world, attempt to solve problems, and bridge gaps of knowledge independently, collaboratively, and resourcefully. It makes schools more like real life because it engages and develops skills that are interdisciplinary in nature and that are highly relevant for deep learning. It immerses students in situations of active learning where students are engaged cognitively (analysis, synthesis, application and creativity), as well as socially, involving them through collaboration with colleagues, leading to interest and ownership in learning.

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## CHAPTER 7

# “Big Results Now” in Tanzanian Education: A Critical Perspective

*Calvin Swai*

### **Abstract**

This research study explores the question of what it means to implement the Big Results Now in Education (BRNiE) initiative in the Tanzanian educational context. The study employed qualitative research protocols and utilised the notions of critical theory in making sense of the image of teaching and learning conveyed through the BRNiE initiative but also to explore possible relations between students, teacher, and curriculum that are likely to be produced by the initiative. The findings of this study reveal the initiative to encourage pre-specified and quantitative teaching and learning, degrading the relative autonomy of classroom teachers to consider impetuous conditions and situations that could arise during the instructional process. The initiative, furthermore, invites outcome- based oriented teaching and learning, since its intent is to increase students' pass rates in national examinations at the expense of their deep understanding of what they are expected to learn. Even so, BRNiE upholds hierarchical relations amongst the centralised curriculum, teachers, and students, a situation that seems to champion a producer- consumer paradigm of education. As such, the study recommends restructuring the initiative in order to expose teachers and

students to the view that the main reason for teaching and learning is to nurture intellectual talents in classrooms.

**Keywords:** *teaching and learning; big results now; qualitative research, relations, critical theory*

## **“Big Results Now” in Tanzanian Education: A Critical Perspective**

Since her independence in December 1961, Tanzania has witnessed the emergence of a variety of reform initiatives, coming with eye-catching titles. Initiatives like ‘Education for Self-Reliance (ESR)’, ‘Education for All’ and the recent ‘Big Results Now’, to mention a few, grabbed the attention of many educators and the general public within and outside the country. At the heart of many initiatives is to improve the quality of basic education in Tanzania, but also to increase children’s access to quality basic education. With such aims, some of the initiatives have been considered successful in humanising education in meaningful ways—leading to improved student learning (Sumra & Katabaro, 2014) and improved school learning infrastructure as a result of rehabilitation and refurbishment of some schools with hardware and software (Swarts & Wachira, 2010).

In contrast, there is considerable evidence from research that some of the initiatives have, unfortunately, degraded the quality of basic education in the country, failing to foster quality student learning in schools. Some scholars and educators have advanced reasons behind such a disturbing situation. Kassam (1983), for example, found some of the initiatives rested on notions of education that contradict the country’s philosophy of education. That is, some of the initiatives seem to advocate a kind of education quite different to what is prioritised in the policy of education. At a different level, Kitta and Fussy (2013) observed teachers (implementers of initiatives) demonstrating paralysed understanding of what the initiatives seek to achieve, a situation that has the potential to make those initiatives fail to deliver the envisaged results. Otherwise, some of the initiatives necessitated injection of large sums of funds that were not readily available (Galabawa, 2001).

Such troubling situations, of course, call for an in-depth examination of initiatives that are to be implemented, as well as those that are already being implemented. Such an important task needs to be grounded on the idea of developing a deeper understanding of initiatives, paying attention to what it might mean to implement the same in the Tanzanian educational context.

## **An Overview of the BRNiE Initiative**

The BRNiE initiative is a Malaysian-inspired scheme launched in February 2013 to “improve the quality of basic education and thereby increase the pass rates in primary and secondary schools” in Tanzania (URT, 2014, para. 6). The initiative was prompted by increased failure rates of students in Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE), Certificate of Secondary Education Examination (CSEE), and Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education Examination (ACSEE) (MoEVT, 2014). In 2002, for example, only 30.7 per cent of those who sat for the PSLE passed, down from 58.3 per cent in 2011, and 66 per cent of students who sat for CSEE scored Division Zero (The World Bank, 2014). Along these lines, the initiative was deemed a remedy for students’ performance in national examinations, increasing students’ pass rates in final national examinations. On such grounds, the World Bank (2014) considers the initiative to pay attention to students’ examination results as a way of establishing a results-oriented culture in Tanzanian education. It is quite puzzling that the initiative’s idea contradicts Tanzania’s ESR policy that founded and strongly championed effective engagement of students in the process of learning.

Prior to the realisation of the BRNiE initiative, the Malaysian policy experts conducted an eight-week coaching session to educational officers for effective implementation of the initiative (The World Bank, 2014). Up to that point, unfortunately, teachers, who are implementers of the initiative, were less engaged in that important session. The message appears to be that the BRNiE initiative was not designed by Tanzanian teachers but one that is to be realised by Tanzanian teachers. The initiative seems to have been predicated on the idea that teachers have the potential to implement the initiative notwithstanding not having taken part in designing it. Initiatives like BRNiE, as Giroux (2013) advances, are nonsensical inasmuch as they are crafted without teacher involvement from the outset. In that way, a handful of possibilities exist for such initiatives, including BRNiE, to propagate ideological mystification among teachers as well as education administrators around the country (Pinar et al, 2008).

## **Research Questions**

The questions for this research study are: What image of teaching and learning is conveyed through the BRNiE initiative within the Tanzanian education context? What relations between students, teacher, and curriculum are likely to be produced by the BRNiE initiative? Answers

to these research questions are not meant to be conclusive, in their own right, but rather, and more importantly, are expected to instigate discussions and debates, focusing on what it means to implement the BRNiE initiative with reference to our philosophy of basic education.

## **Theoretical Perspectives Situating the Study**

As suggested by many educational researchers around the world, a research study needs to be grounded on theoretical perspectives to locate the study within a broad research scholarship (Thomas, 2009) but also as a framework for interpretation of research data (Davis & Simmt, 2006). In point of fact, this research study is informed by critical theory as presented by Henry Giroux (1993). Pragmatically speaking, critical theory is employed because of its insightful notions around the nature of teaching and learning and how teaching and learning might be understood in the presence of students' experiences, values, prior understanding, and nascent situations that might occur during the teaching and learning. That is, they are not meant to be perceived as simple activities, whatever that might look like, but rather, and more importantly, as multifaceted and nested activities.

One of the prime roles of teachers in such a learning context is to invite students to actively engage in the process of learning, but also to create the conditions and relationships that have the potential to facilitate meaningful student learning (Giroux, 1993). Through critical theory, I have become mindful that there are diverse forms of teaching and learning but effective teaching is founded on the idea of cognizing a classroom as a place for nurturing students' intellectual talents and capabilities. Consistent with this study is critical theory's notion of discouraging an understanding of teaching and learning as linear processes that have a particular preordained end. It is in this sense that critical theory becomes enormously relevant and germane in this research study—helping to make sense of what is considered as teaching and learning in the BRNiE initiative.

With critical theory, then again, the idea is to explore the relations (between teachers, students, and curriculum) that are likely to be produced by the initiative. In the teaching and learning context, from Giroux's (1993) viewpoint, the classroom ought to be a space where both teachers and students realise level-headed opportunities and possibilities that could allow them to cordially engage in the process of teaching and learning. From the vantage of critical theory, such situations, which seem to empower students, have the potential to facilitate meaningful

student learning. This is a case where students become an integral part of the teaching and the learning process.

One of the critical theory perspectives, consistent with this study, is the idea of creating relationships that could help students realise opportunities to integrate their ideas, opinions, concerns, and views as shaped by their contexts and experiences (Giroux, 1993). Along these lines, the theory asserts three notions: (i) teachers are transformative agents with intellectual authority; (ii) teaching has to encourage qualitative learning rather than quantitative learning among students; and (iii) students are active rather than recipients/instruments of education (Giroux, 1993). It is such a resonance that critical theory is employed to aid the interpretation of research data.

## **Research Methodology and Design**

### **Research Paradigm: Ontological and epistemological deliberations**

In research scholarship, many researchers have sensed the need for researchers to articulate the paradigm they subscribe to. One of the reasons for such an engagement is to help readers of research reports to become aware of what the researcher(s) seem to believe when it comes to how one views the reality of the social and the natural world (Thomas, 2009). This study embraces a constructivist paradigm that adopts a relativist ontology and a subjectivist epistemology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). On the one hand, with relativist ontology, the researcher of this study subscribes to the view that there are multiple realities that exist in the social and natural world. Such an ontological position is founded on the idea that what we call reality changes over time, depending on the context, individual values, and beliefs about the world.

With a subjectivist epistemology, on the other hand, the study believes knowledge to be co-created by both the researcher and participants during the research process. As follows, the researcher of this study embraces the notion that research participants engage in the active process of creating knowledge alongside the researcher of a particular study. Particularly important is the idea that knowledge is not discovered, but rather, and more importantly, created through active engagements of individuals (Schwandt, 1994).

### **Methodological deliberations**

Qualitative methodology, as informed by Stake (2010) and Merriam (2014), was adopted in this research study in order to promote the

richness and depth of research data. The idea was to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon— the BRNiE initiative— in relation to its influence on teaching and learning in the Tanzanian context, but also to draw attention to the “processes, meaning patterns and structural features” (Flick, Kardorff & Steinke, 2004, p. 1) of the initiative in question. With this methodology, as suggested by Merriam (2014), the researcher of the study becomes a primary instrument of the study. In qualitative research this is pivotal because “understanding is the goal of this research, the human instrument, which is able to be immediately responsive and adaptive, would seem to be the ideal means of collecting and analysing data” (Merriam, 2014, p. 15).

With such a role, the researcher of the study engaged in a thorough review of the initiative (through a documentary review schedule) to develop an in-depth understanding of the initiative in its broadest sense. As a primary instrument of this research study, I worked to imagine the implementation of the initiative by teachers and students in the Tanzanian classroom settings. Throughout the research process, I constantly engaged in writing notes in the margins and memos to myself as “reflections, tentative themes, hunches, ideas, and things to pursue” (Merriam, 2014, p. 170) as they arose in the review of the document. Such protocols were key in eliciting rich information for interpretation.

As this study aimed to explore the question of what it means to implement the BRNiE initiative in Tanzania, the researcher interweaved data analysis with data collection. In analysing data for this research study, the study utilised Miles and Huberman’s (1994), “three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing” (p. 10). The researcher, thereafter, engaged in the process of constructing thematic conceptual schemes with regard to the themes that emerged during analysis of the research data.

## **Findings and Discussion**

### **Image of teaching and learning that might be conveyed through the BRNiE initiative**

As revealed in the document, the title of the initiative seems to orient teachers and students towards an acquisition of intended learning outcomes. The three words—Big, Results, Now—seem to say it all. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2014), ‘big’ means ‘large,’ ‘great in quantity,’ or ‘bulk’; ‘results’ means ‘to rise as a consequence,’ ‘effect,’ or ‘result’; and ‘now’ means ‘at the present time or moment’ or

‘in the time immediately to follow’. With these meanings, sorry to say, the BRNiE initiative, as Giroux (1993) accentuates, treats teaching and learning as a mechanistic, deterministic and simplistic act devised to perpetuate reproduction of knowledge among students as opposed to exposing students to situations and conditions that have the potential to yield a volatile and heterogeneous assortment of learning outcomes.

With the intent of creating conditions for students to pass national final examinations, the BRNiE initiative appears to encourage pre-specified and objective teaching and learning in Tanzanian classrooms. Such teaching and learning, as Aoki (1983) describes, encourages installation of the unified curriculum for students, with teachers assuming the major role of dispensing the commodity (knowledge) to the students for their consumption. Undoubtedly, this kind of teaching and learning has the potential to erode the relative autonomy of teachers to consider unpredictable situations that might arise during the instructional process. On his work, *Pedagogy of Freedom*, Freire (1998) refers to this kind of schooling as a form of “extreme anti-intellectualism” (p. xvii), as it seems to be unconcerned with subjectivities naturally embodied in teachers and students. Ironically, such teaching and learning may cynically be “removed from the everyday realities of classroom life” (Giroux, 1993, p. 272, para. 1).

With the intent of increasing students’ pass rates in their final examinations, the BRNiE initiative appears to invite outcome-based oriented teaching and learning at the expense of a deep understanding of the reality. Apple (1993) criticizes this kind of teaching and learning on the grounds that it depends on “reductive behaviourally based curricula, pre-specified teaching ‘competences’ and procedures and student responses” (p. 256). With such instrumental neutrality, there are possibilities for students to be compelled to conform to tyrannical conditions created by standardised teaching and learning tasks for them to pass national examinations. So to say, classrooms become places for incarceration as students have to acquire homologous knowledge without making connections to lived conditions they experience in their lives as human beings (Giroux, 2011).

The word ‘Now’ in the title seems to regard teaching and learning as a ‘quick fixing’ process to be facilitated by the classroom teachers. It seems fair to note that the teaching and learning process is considered something that can be fast-tracked. Such a situation is apparent based on the World Bank’s (2014) avowal that the intent of the BRNiE initiative is to achieve results much more quickly and as efficiently as possible. In

critical pedagogy perspective, this is possible only if the plan is not to develop student agency, but rather to gain lower-order thinking skills, so to speak. Alexander (2013, as cited in Giroux, 2013) sees this kind of teaching and learning as “feeding prisons”, rather than opening up opportunities beyond those outlined in the planned curriculum (para. 3). The metaphor at work looks appropriate for the reason that the mechanised teaching and learning encouraged in the BRNiE initiative seems undaunted with helping students make sense of what they experience in their lives, and is rather designed to help pass written examinations for placement purposes.

To ensure actualisation of intended results, the BRNiE initiative seems to call for controlled teaching and learning in primary and secondary schools (MoEVT, 2014, para.2). This suggests that MoEVT has little trust and confidence in teachers referring to what they do in classrooms. Giroux (1993) sees controlling teaching and learning as an obstacle to meaningful learning, as it encourages acquisition of standardised knowledge. Such control seems to corrode creativity and curiosity among teachers as they are compelled to focus on what is planned by experts. Through such control, as Freire (1998) stresses, teachers become de-skilled and get considered “agents in the production of knowledge rather than opening up the possibilities for the construction of knowledge” (p. 31). Instead, as Freire (1998) suggests, teachers must be “deliberate, make decisions, and take positions” (p. 80) as they work to facilitate student learning.

Undoubtedly, with such situations, curriculum implementation is “one in which to implement is to put into practice curriculum-as-plan (i.e., to apply to a practical situation as an ideal construct)” (Aoki, 1983, p. 118). In this way, teaching and learning become a harmonious process of transmitting knowledge from the teacher to students as planned in the curriculum. The sole responsibility of teachers and students is to cover the planned curriculum within a specified period of time. From the vantage of critical pedagogy, this kind of teaching and learning leaves students with no or little space for imagination and reflection on what they are learning in the classroom.

### **Relations produced by the BRNiE initiative**

With the focus on the realisation of results in a short period of time, the BRNiE initiative seems to produce hierarchical relations between curriculum, teacher, and students. Seemingly, the power is distributed by the curriculum to teachers and then to students, as the BRNiE



initiative seems to lie within what Aoki (1983) called the “producer-consumer paradigm” (p. 112, para. 7). Within such power relations, no healthy interrelations and interactions are expected to exist between teacher, students, and curriculum. In the critical pedagogy perspective, teacher, student and curricular relations are worth pursuing when they set up conditions for shared knowledge and perspectives.

### **Relations between student and teacher**

The BRNiE initiative encourages power relations between the teachers and students, with the former enjoying power to instil into students the wished-for knowledge enshrined in the curriculum. This is the case as teachers are the ones trusted with the responsibility for the results (in the approved manner) achieved. Along these lines, as Giroux (2011) stresses, while the teacher becomes “reduced to technician”, students are “positioned as mere recipients of the worst form of banking education” (p. 12). From the critical theory point of view, this kind of a relationship seems to breed passivity, neutrality, and denaturalisation in the place of vitality, hope, and enjoyment.

Freire (1970) is critical of this kind of relation in teaching and learning contexts. He writes the “more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world” (p. 73). Such a relation is, evidently, undemocratic and antithetical to students, depriving them of opportunities to make connections with other bodies of knowledge in order to gain mindfulness of the reality (Freire, 1998). It makes sense to think that in such relations, teachers might engage in teaching without humility, as the initiative seems to encourage them to exercise power over students during the instructional process.

### **Relations between student and curriculum**

The BRNiE initiative seems to oil the wheels of exploitation as the curriculum seems to treat teachers as objects of learning. This can be seen in the fact that students have to bank the pieces of information intentionally identified by experts in the ministry in order to pass examinations. As such, students become oriented to learning to pass examinations instead of deepening their intellectuality through reflection and juggling around with ideas. Such a disturbing situation gives the impression of producing a subservient relation between the students and curriculum, with the former subservient to the latter.

Such a relationship in a teaching and learning environment, according to Giroux (2011), not only deforms ingenuity of students but also dismantles their worlds as the curriculum dictates what, how and when to learn. Freire (1998) is also sceptical with this sort of relation—believing that it has the potential to produce pseudo-students who perpetuate the hegemony of positivism. Pinar, et al (2008) consider such a curriculum to falsify students' consciousness.

### **Relations between teacher and curriculum**

The BRNiE initiative seems to produce a unidirectional relation between teachers and the curriculum, the latter assuming more power over the former. This relation, unfortunately, hugely delimits teaching and learning as the curriculum appears to provide teachers with standardised teaching and learning activities to use in the classroom with a predetermined pace of teaching and student learning (Giroux, 1993). In this manner, therefore, the curriculum seems to rob teachers of the intellectual authority to explore other bodies of knowledge not included in the curriculum. Ironically, as Giroux (1993) argues, teaching is likely to be “dominated by behaviouristic orientation and emphasis on mastering subject areas and methods of teaching” (p. 273, para. 4). In so doing, teachers become reduced to the “status of specialised technicians within the school bureaucracy, whose function then becomes one of managing and implementing curricular programs” (Giroux, 1993, p. 273).

While Aoki (1983) views treating teachers as instruments as depriving them of their humanness and reducing them to technicians, McLaren (1989, as cited in Pinar, et al., 2008) considers this situation essential in breeding hegemony as it distorts teachers' conceptions of how they can teach in their classrooms. It is quite fair to think that teachers will experience limited opportunities to develop pedagogical authority and epistemological curiosity in teaching, as they are mainly compelled to memorise pre-specified methods, ideas, and concepts, as well as skills. This happens at the expense of developing the ability to create conditions for reflection and reflexivity among students (Giroux (1993).

### **Conclusion**

In critical theory perspectives, the BRNiE initiative seems to encourage outcome-based and one-sided curriculum implementation in Tanzanian primary and secondary schools. This, it seems, will dedicatedly forge conditions that disempower teachers and students of their intellectuality

during the teaching and learning process. All this happens in the name of increasing pass rates in national examinations. Without a doubt, this makes the process of student learning unfinished, as the students have only to adjust themselves to fit the demands of passing examinations.

To improve the quality of education in Tanzanian schools, the BRNiE initiative could have been structured to expose students to “the view that the reason for learning is to nurture their intellectual talents for constructing our society into a more democratic, just, and caring place to live” (Goodman, 1992, as cited in Pinar, et al, 2008, p. 258). To achieve this, the BRNiE initiative could have shown how a school should educate students in meaningful ways. My conjecture is that the BRNiE initiative was designed to attend to politically valued intentionality rather than thickening the horizons of possibilities for teachers and students to excavate meaningful learning in schools.

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## CHAPTER 8

# Early Years Education and Development: a Need or Luxury?

*Mary Oluga*

### **Abstract**

While some societies have recognised the importance of investing in early years education, it is really in the very recent times that the same concept is gaining momentum in parts of the Sub-Saharan Africa. Successful Early Childhood Education and Development depends on a number of interrelated factors. These factors in turn are responsible for ensuring dependable human capital for a country's economic health. This chapter details the outcomes of a series of interventions on Early Years Education carried out with teachers and respective stakeholders in under-resourced communities in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The mixed-method triangulated approach pointed at a number of challenges as obstacles to recognition of the significance of Early Childhood Education and Development in the focus areas. These challenges formed the focus of the interventions and included key areas such as parental and community involvement, school readiness by both children and schools, health factors and children's rights. Other considerations were made on driving factors such as the nature of the school curriculum and assessment structures. The intervention studies revealed that support of all types, especially on improving and re-thinking parenting and school roles, is crucial in developing desired human capital that can transform

a society's economy. The recommendations call for investments in children's early learning for anticipated dividends later in life. Alternative ways of empowering parents and communities to enable them to finance and provide other support to children's education and development should be sought. Policy makers ought to find more equitable and cost effective ways of scaling up quality education for children.

**Key Words:** *Early years education and development, care, learning, access, pre-primary, primary, low resource*

## Introduction

Early childhood education and care has been on the reform agenda in many countries, including African countries. The aim is to provide developmental care and support for children in their formative years. Through this, it is hoped that children will acquire skills necessary for future learning and success in school and the life after.

In order for the countries to realise these ambitions, all children 0-8 years of age need to be nurtured in a safe environment that is healthy, alert and secure, so that they are able to learn and achieve the desired competencies and learning outcomes.

However, the contact with foreign education left Africa with a 'bruised cultural identity' (Boakye-Boaten, 2010) that has impacted heavily on child development. This is especially in cases where the school curricula contrast with traditional forms of education and demand a move away from the social and cultural teachings of young people.

The purpose of this paper is to establish the way interventions were used to help stakeholders, including parents, communities and school management, rethink their focus on early years education to improve student retention, transition and learning achievements. To achieve this, the study was guided by the following specific objectives: to establish the measures that had been put in place to manage Early Years Education in line with FPE, and to find out the degree of focus on Early Years Education, including provision of related resources.

The paper begins by providing some related information regarding the situation of Early Years Education in the three countries, followed by a discussion of the methodology applied to attain the data informing the discussion. Finally, the findings and implications are presented.

## The Situation

There may be differences in the quality of early years education in the three East African countries that this paper focuses on, but the general

statuses of early years education do have some similarities, as indicated in Figure 8.1.

**Table 8.1: The Situation of Early Years Education in Three East African Countries**

| Country  | Net Primary enrolment rate | Children out of school     | Poverty |
|----------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------|
| Tanzania | 94%                        | Ages 7-13:<br>489,673 (7%) | 89%     |
| Kenya    | 95%                        | Ages 6-13:<br>415,000 (5%) | 20%     |
| Uganda   | 93.65%                     | Ages 6-13:<br>700,588 (9%) | 62%     |

Sources: Tanzania – BEST 2011; \*Source: Education Sector Performance Report 2010-2011  
 Uganda – World Bank (2013), Demographic and Health Survey (2011)  
 Kenya – UNESCO Institute of Statistics (2013) Kenya – Education Policy Data Centre

## Are our Countries on Track?

The East African countries, like others especially in the developing world, were incentivised to attain Universal Primary Education (UPE) through accelerated strategies. However, the question is twofold; with a weak or no foundation in the pre-primary education, what quality of learners is expected to transit to primary class, and are there appropriate and adequate measures in place for the implementation of such strategies, including the Free Primary Education (FPE)? For example, with FPE, countries seem to be ‘on track’ to achieve the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) for enrolment in primary school for boys and girls, but evidence does not show corresponding increase in the number of trained teachers. The education system struggles to deliver quality education. Classroom sizes have mushroomed, yet there is not enough infrastructure; hence it is possible to find as many as 200 children in a class. The challenge of poor quality is a general problem across the East African states, with some states doing relatively better on some indicators than others. For instance, the primary education completion rate is higher in Kenya at 81.8% in 2013 (Kenya Education for All 2015 National Review). Kenya also has a relatively better transition rate at 76.6% compared to Uganda’s 69.9 % in 2013(Kenya EFA 2015 National Review). Tanzania retention rates to

P.7 (78.4%, 2013), is the highest in the sub-region (Tanzania EFA 2015 National Review).

In Tanzania, for example, enrolment in pre-primary education has grown from 554,835 pupils in 2004 to 1,026,466 in 2013, an increase of 85.0 percent in 10 years. This figure should have spiked to much higher levels with recent focus on pre-primary enrolment.

Since full enrolment in pre-primary education has not yet been achieved as required by policy, a fast growth of enrolment is desired and necessary. Available data shows that pre-primary education is skewed towards regions where households' incomes and urbanisation levels are high. Regions where the household incomes are relatively high tend to attract providers of pre-primary education.

The scenario lends itself to the conclusion that while the countries may be 'on track' to achieve the Millennium Development Goal for enrolment in primary school for boys and girls, the education system struggles to deliver quality education, and especially in the early years, due to different contextual reasons.

## Methodology

This paper is based on intervention studies that involved mixed methods, with triangulated methods of data collection including classroom observations and document analysis to glean empirical evidence. It focused on teaching and learning of age 3 to 8 of schooling.

The data was generated from three East African countries: Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, in three phases. This is regarding interventions through offering two types of courses: two short courses of one week each in "Assessment in Early Years Learning", and three certificate courses of six months each in "Teaching, Learning and Assessment in the Early Years Curriculum", implemented and attended by teachers of pre-primary and early primary school teachers. The first phase is based on the pre-observation information gathered about the schools, teachers and classroom conditions before the interventions. Respective observation schedules, interview guides and document analysis protocols were used. The teachers' qualifications, number of years in practice and nature of practice, including ways of maintaining professional records and general classroom practices, were observed. The purpose was basically to gather information on the quality of teachers that handle the early years learners. Factors relating to the school readiness for early years education, especially in relation to administration of the same, was gathered.



In the second phase of data collection, which was basically the intervention, running notes were kept relating to changes observed in teacher attitudes from the classroom discussions and reading of their reflective journals. The intervention had introduced teachers to suitable teaching methods including use of play, classroom management and professional development techniques, including peer support and materials development. Using classroom observation schedules, teachers were observed teaching and attempting to implement their learning from the certificate courses. The level of changes in classroom conditions and the impact that these had on children's learning were noted. This phase of data collection noted the outcomes of peer support that teachers were engaged in, especially during the seminars where they shared their successes and challenges.

The third phase of data collection used classroom observation schedules to understand the impact that the interventions had on the teacher practices and children's learning.

The schools where the data that inform this paper were drawn are in the low-resourced communities under focus of Strengthening Education Systems in East Africa (SESEA).

## **Findings of the Study**

The findings discussed here relate to the unsatisfactory quality of education offered to the early years children. The possible reasons leading to this, such as large numbers in the classrooms and low socio economic status of households, are discussed. Other infringing factors such as changing roles of motherhood and children, safety of the learning environment and availability of learning resources are also discussed. The poor teacher quality in terms of practices and preparation and nature of curriculum leaves a lot to be desired about the significance put on early years education. In all the three regions, there were cases of para-professionals handling the pre-primary classes.

### **Large numbers**

Reducing class size to increase student achievement is an approach that has been quite elusive in the context of the study, especially with the introduction of Free Primary Education as one of the strategies of achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It supposes that with fewer students to teach, teachers can coax better performance from each of them. Though it can be argued otherwise that there may be no concrete connection between smaller classes and higher student achievement,

most of the research shows that when class size reduction programs are well-designed and implemented in the primary grades (K-3), student achievement rises as class size drops (Centre for Public Education). However, in the context of the study, the poor infrastructure, lack of scholastic materials and inadequate parental involvement to support children's learning compromise the quality of teaching and, in turn, the learning outcomes expected from the students. Both teachers and students end up with disaffection about school and their classrooms. Some parents opt to withdraw their children from such schools and take them to private schools where class sizes are relatively smaller. Again, this evidences the fact that quality early years education is accessible mainly to those that are financially able.

**Figure 8.1: A Primary Class Children in One of the Schools**



### *Economic and social status of households*

The low economic and social status of households compromises the purchasing power of the parents, especially in the situation where parents and communities are basically the funders of the children's scholastic needs. Most of the development needs of the schools are in the hands of the parents. As one head teacher in Tanzania commented about lack of adequate and suitable classrooms:

"The parents we have are basically subsistence farmers. They cannot even raise two meals for the families and it is very difficult for me to keep talking about money and building materials. It is like trying to squeeze water out of a rock" (Male head teacher).

Disease and Poverty are obstacles to children's welfare (Adebowale 2000). A majority of the schools had instituted school feeding programmes where children get porridge during the mid-morning break. The implementation of this was found to be quite erratic, as

parents could only contribute the maize for as long as the season's harvest lasted. After this, schools have to release schoolchildren, especially the pre-primary children, an hour earlier as not much learning can take place when children are hungry.

"In some cases, the school porridge served at 10.00am is the first meal that the child has for the day" (Female head teacher).

The lack of prowess of parents and community in supporting Early Years Education is further compromised by other parental and communal responsibilities, one of which is the changing roles of motherhood.

### *Changing role of motherhood*

With the situation where both parents have to be away fending for family income, the children most of the times are on their own after school. Their health and learning go unmonitored for long hours and sometimes, by the time it is realised, the child is not able to go to school. The roles of the mothers have changed from care giving to income generation and they have very minimal opportunities for paying parental attention to the social and health needs of the children. This leads to increased absenteeism from school.

### **Make the changing role of motherhood come out more clearly**

#### *Transfer of learners*

In other cases, there is increased mobility of children from one school category to another due to parents' assumed perception of quality. When such parents find they have some disposable funds, they transfer their children from public pre-primary schools to private schools in low-resourced areas. Such private schools have 'mushroomed' under very inappropriate standards and taken advantage of parents' perception of quality rather than an actual measure of quality. This adds to the question of the nature of physical environments in the discussion, which follows.

#### *Safety and adequacy of physical environment*

Many public schools lack financial strength for customised structures, thereby exposing children to the harsh realities of extreme weather conditions. This leads to both teacher discomfort with work and student disaffection with schooling and compromises the achievement of desired learning outcomes. Play activities that teachers and parents had been introduced to could not materialise either because there was inadequate space or the conditions were unfavourable – dusty, bushy

with stones spread out on the grounds. Where the schools have some better structure, the rooms are reserved for the upper classes because that is where ‘learning and teaching’ take place. This evidences the way less significance is attached to the pre/lower-primary classes.

**Figure: 8.2 Some Teaching conditions in the Early Years**



And



This was a fact realised even in Uganda where the pre-primary schools are managed by the private sector and some pre-primary classrooms are run in dilapidated rooms at local shopping centres, leaving no space for outdoor activities at all. The pictures above depict the related scenarios. The first pair, in a rural setting, show class three in a classroom made out of twigs with a scanty grass thatched roof, while the top-class (pre-unit) is taught under a tree. The rest of the compound is not cleared of the bushes, and has dusty patches, especially in the dry season. In contrast is the pair of pictures below them with the pre-primary having a sports day in well-kept grounds, while next to it is a class two taught in relatively well maintained structures. The latter pair is of schools maintained by religious organisations and located in the more urban settings. The glaring difference due to imbalance in resources is obvious, with the disadvantaged children having their learning in very compromised conditions.

### *Inadequate and inappropriate learning materials*

The general belief in the elusive commercially made resources by key stakeholders in the early years sector hinders teacher and parent creativity from making and using teaching and learning materials out of low-cost or no-cost materials. Where, for example, indigenous knowledge can be a resource for stories, rhymes and songs to enrich children's literacy development, schools try to purchase at least one copy of nursery rhymes that can only be handled by the teacher who recites the age old rhymes like 'Humpty Dumpty'. Of course the children may end up repeating the sounds after the teacher, but without enjoying and understanding the content, and therefore failing to relate what they learn with real life.

One teacher commented after sessions on materials development during a professional development course that:

"I feel really ashamed thinking of how we waste children's time when we teach using some of these things that they know nothing about *x for xylophone* – really even myself I have never seen a xylophone. And to think that when they fail to remember these we reprimand them... No wonder children end up hating school." (Female pre-primary class teacher)

Although the Learning Framework specified the kind of learning materials for pre-schools, most of the materials are not available. As a result, only "high-class" pre-schools access these materials; the rest have ended up using improvised (and most times) primary education

instructional materials instead. With the understanding that quality pre-primary and primary education depends on availability of adequate, appropriate and relevant learning materials, this may not be achieved with the status above.

### *Poor teacher quality*

While, agreeably, there is increase in student enrolment with the focus on Free Primary Education, there has been no corresponding increase in the number of trained teachers. Many pre-primary classes are taught by para-professionals or teachers qualified to teach in the primary classes. This lack of attention in the pre-primary classes, and sometimes in classes one and two, leave a lot to be desired about the teacher competences. Responding to the question, “What do you understand by thematic curriculum?” one such teacher says with seeming confidence that it means teaching using the local language as a medium of instruction. Since a majority of the teachers had perfected the misguided practice of teaching contents in isolation, not all were able to implement the desired integration of different content areas under a unit, say, ‘the people in our school’, as in the syllabus in Uganda.

Another worrying fact is that teachers could not distinctly relate the concept of ‘learning area’ with the desired content meant to aid the achievement of learning outcomes. After demonstrations during the courses, teachers displayed a better understanding of the same and could make references to the ‘new’ arrangements in their classrooms. More child-led learning was also realised, especially during the post-intervention observations. However, one teacher lamented:

“It is good that I can now teach from an informed perspective. We were only thirty during the course, who I can say have this knowledge – what about the hundreds of teachers out there who are making the mistakes we used to make. These children ... when will those misconceptions be corrected – they go up there (upper classes) with wrong ideas.”

### *Teacher education and training*

The fact that those handling teaching, especially in the pre-primary classes, are mostly para-professionals is a reflection of the neglect that the early years education has been accorded in the three countries. In Uganda, for example, according to National Planning Authority (2015), most of the pre-school teachers are Senior Four and Primary 7 leavers and some have no prior training in pre-school pedagogy. The majority of qualified pre-school teachers (mainly trained by Young Women’s



Christian Association (YWCA) and Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) ) are usually recruited by elite pre-schools located in the major urban centres (particularly Kampala), yet these institutions were not originally established as pre-primary Teacher Training Colleges.

*Content of early learning programme*

In a number of cases, children have a difficult start of primary education since they were excluded from the pre-primary schooling. This is stressful for both the teacher and the child, and such children find it difficult to continue; when this difficulty is compounded with other factors such as distance from school and poverty, such children repeat classes 1 and 2 or drop out from school. The figure below is a demonstration of such obvious decrease in the statistics.

**Figure 8.3: Enrolment Figures Showing a Decrease in Numbers After Class 1 and 2**

| Alarming Decrease in Enrolment Statistics |      |       |       |
|-------------------------------------------|------|-------|-------|
| Pupil Enrolment 2015                      |      |       |       |
| Class                                     | Boys | Girls | Total |
| P1                                        | 188  | 110   | 262   |
| P2                                        | 72   | 40    | 112   |
| P3                                        | 51   | 59    | 110   |
| P4                                        | 62   | 48    | 105   |
| P5                                        | 44   | 21    | 65    |
| P6                                        | 21   | 10    | 31    |
| P7                                        | 17   | 7     | 24    |
| Total                                     | 425  | 290   | 715   |
| Pupil Enrolment 2016                      |      |       |       |
| Class                                     | Boys | Girls | Total |
| P1                                        | 120  | 110   | 230   |
| P2                                        | 58   | 55    | 113   |
| P3                                        | 72   | 44    | 116   |
| P4                                        | 66   | 61    | 127   |
| P5                                        | 44   | 31    | 75    |
| P6                                        | 17   | 16    | 33    |
| P7                                        | 17   | 08    | 25    |
| Total                                     | 394  | 325   | 719   |

In addition, when children are taught content that has very little or no relation to their childhood contexts, they find learning the content

quite challenging, and schooling becomes a burden to the developing minds. This advocates for keen attention to local and global perspectives to enrich knowledge on child development.

### *Changing view of childhood*

There is this child in my class who was constantly throwing up. At some point she did not want to take porridge that we serve them during the mid-morning break. The Head teacher told me to take her to hospital since the parents were not keen or able to do so. My shock ... the nurses told me that the nine-year-old girl was pregnant.

The scenario above, given by a teacher in coastal Kenya, provided the stark realities of the community's regard for children. Someone had abused the child, denying her any more opportunities for childhood and education. Coupled with this is the fact that the moment the children get home, they embark on domestic chores of cleaning, fetching water and fire wood, looking after (babysitting) their younger siblings and even cooking. This was more pronounced in the cases where the parents are away, as revealed by the students interviewed. The respective teachers volunteered some of this information, a fact that mystified the roles of children. Their time for play to attain healthy brain development is therefore compromised, against the expectations of Ginsburg, 2007, that:

“Play allows children to use their creativity while developing their imagination, dexterity, and physical, cognitive, and emotional strength.”

Play is important to healthy brain development. It is through play that children at a very early age engage and interact in the world around them.

### *Roles of children*

According to Nsamenang (1992), ‘social apprenticing’, the second phase of the growth of social selfhood, roughly corresponds with childhood. In the African setup this is the stage where pre-adolescent and adolescent children are initiated into social roles that pertain to four hierarchical spheres of life: self, household, network, and public. The children are assigned various responsibilities, including the care of and socialisation of younger siblings for the purpose of priming the emergence of social responsibility. In this study, children of ages five to seven were found out of school, looking after their younger siblings either at home in the absence of the parents, or with the parents (especially mothers) away in the farms or at the market places. The pre-adolescents of ages



between ten and twelve would have to get home in time to prepare the mid-day meal for the whole family, a fact which required that they missed some lessons before the lunch break or get back to school late for the afternoon session. This scenario has important implications for the design of culturally appropriate forms of intervention so that this important component of 'social integration' is not lost and, at the same time, children do not miss out on their right to education.

### *Age to begin (or exit) school*

Teachers are in dilemma over the varying ages of learners in their classrooms. In most cases with only one room for the pre-primary class, the age range is from three to seven years. The teachers find it difficult to cater for the differing abilities of such wide age differences. One teacher lamented:

"The government wants all children to be in school. That one there (pointing to a child in class) is three years old and this one here is seven. This one of seven just came last month and could not manage class one work so the head teacher said I should have him here to 'warm up'. Some parents also want to avoid making payments so they wait until the third term (September) then bring the child to wait here to be admitted to class one. For the three years, the mother says she has no one to leave the child with at home when she goes to work." (Pre-primary teacher, Kenya)

### *Quality of early years education – generally poor*

This section above has discussed the study findings, which demonstrate with indicators that the quality of early years education, especially in the intervention areas, are wanting. The poor state of resources denies children and teachers opportunities to use play as a core strategy for enhancing learning in early years. The situation therefore begs for an answer on what kind of priority is given to education in the early years.

### **Implications**

The findings point to the need to review factors like the Policy framework, access, quality and curriculum offered in the early years, especially in relation to pre-primary classes.

For policy, ways should be sought to contextualise factors related to Early Childhood Development. For example, indigenous knowledge should be used in the development of early childhood policy and practices (Pence and Shafer 2006). This goes together with well thought-out generative curriculum models in which students contribute to

the learning process. Play as a core element of children's learning and development should be embedded in the curriculum with interplay between child-led and teacher-led activities.

Access to early years education has become an elusive factor, and yet a very necessary foundation. Private participation in the provision of education has been more noticeable at the pre-primary education level in Tanzania, with remarkable numbers in the non-government schools showing an increase by 678.7 percent in the past 10 years compared to 380.2 percent in primary (PMORALG 2013). This scenario is reflected in Uganda, where, currently, the pre-primary education is mainly in the private sector, thus closing out children whose parents cannot afford the same.

The scenario discussed above therefore requires that respective governments consider availability of opportunities for children to access schooling and put measures in place that should cater for the gender considerations for all children to enjoy schooling.

Quality assurance roles need to be re-thought with well-stated standards, especially in the schools outside the urban areas. Rights-based approaches (Nsamenang, 2009) would help in ensuring not only child safety and security but also that children are retained in the schools and transition rates are improved.

## **Conclusion**

As it currently is, the promotion of universal access to quality early childhood education and care remains a significant challenge for educators and policy makers in Africa and especially East Africa. Yet from studies – investing in early childhood education can produce higher rates of returns to individuals and the community. This could be seen in the few well-resourced schools where children were well ahead in their learning outcomes compared to their counterparts in the low-resourced schools. Where and when teachers had been enabled, for example, to prepare and use instructional materials from low-cost or no-cost materials, the learning atmosphere changed for the better. The teachers were more enthusiastic about their work and children displayed eagerness to stay in school and learn.

The poor quality of education suggests that more thoughts should be injected into the management and facilitation of education in the early years, and especially in the low-resourced communities. If not done, communities, especially from the low-resourced contexts, may not put

much significance on Early Years Education, and instead consider it a luxury beyond their means.

Research is therefore recommended that can establish related factors such as:

- Young children as participants of research rather than objects on which research is conducted and,
- Ways of empowering parents to finance and support Early Years Education.

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## CHAPTER 9

# Assessment of Educational Opportunities and Quality for Pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorder in Selected Primary Schools in Tanzania

*Peter E. Mwamwaja*

### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to assess educational opportunities and quality of education for children with autism spectrum disorder in selected primary schools in Tanzania. Specific objectives were to examine the appropriateness of teaching and learning resources for children with autism spectrum disorder in primary schools, and to assess teaching and learning approaches employed for enhancing learning capabilities of children with autism spectrum disorder in selected primary schools. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative research approaches with a descriptive case study design. Sampling techniques including random and purposive sampling procedures were employed to obtain data for this study. The research data were collected using questionnaires, interviews, and observations. Four primary schools were purposively chosen from the Dar es Salam and Mbeya regions. Three major findings are presented in light of the research objectives. First, the findings revealed that primary schools surveyed in this research are

faced with an extreme shortage of teaching and learning resources for children with autism spectrum disorder to acquire specified knowledge and skills. Secondly, the findings have shown that teaching and learning approaches used in schools were less appropriate and did not capture the learning needs of the children with autism spectrum disorder. Thirdly, the study found that inclusion of children with autism spectrum disorder in primary education helped them to improve their learning capabilities and earned remarkable changes in living skills through interactions with peers without disabilities and special education teachers. The study therefore recommends a number of actions for improvement to make quality primary education more accessible for children with autism spectrum disorder in Tanzania. The study specifically recommends ensuring sufficient supply of teaching and learning resources, as well as training more special education teachers for enabling learning of children with autism spectrum disorder.

## **Introduction**

Pupils with autism or pupils with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) are children with deficits in developing social and communication skills. Pupils with autism spectrum disorder often have accompanying learning difficulties. However, despite their general level of intelligence or ability, they share a common difficulty in making sense of work in the way other (normal) pupils do (Stone & Turner, 2005). ASD is present from birth or very early in the pupil's development. It affects essential human behaviours such as social interaction, the ability to communicate ideas and feelings, imagination, and the establishment of relationships with others. Generally, it has life-long effects on how children learn to be social beings, to take care of themselves, and to participate in the community. Most pupils with ASD have difficulty in processing auditory information. Some pupils with autism are labelled with mental retardation, but this label is for individuals who are not autistic (Siegal & Blades, 2003; Hall & Isaacs, 2012). No particular level of intelligence or cognitive capacity defines autism; instead it is a unique rewiring of how the brain processes sensory inputs and relates that to expressive behaviour.

In Tanzania, several initiatives have been put in place to ensure that pupils with ASD attain primary education in an inclusive education setting. Such initiatives include the introduction of syllabi for learners with mental disabilities, which comprise those pupils with ASD. The question of relevance of the curriculum becomes crucial since it is

important to ensure that education provided to pupils with ASD enables them to live independently for the rest of their lives (Hippensteel, 2008; URT, 2008). Living independently refers to the ability of an individual to engage in social relations, as well as make appropriate choices which influence their wellbeing.

Following the difficulties faced by pupils with ASD in learning, the curriculum for children with intellectual disabilities was prepared to specifically reduce the following: difficulties in learning within and outside school environment, difficulties in everyday living, difficulties in communication, and delay in developmental stages. The primary education curriculum has four main objectives. The first objective is to provide autistic and mentally retarded children with opportunities to recognise themselves and their environment. The second one is to mould the character of the child and enable him/her to acquire acceptable norms of social conduct and behaviour. The third is to encourage and promote autistic and mentally retarded children acquiring skills for self-reliant lives. The fourth is to provide autistic and mentally retarded children with opportunities to acquire and develop reading, writing and numerical skills. The main subjects in the curriculum are mathematics, caring, health skills, communication skills and psychomotor and vocational skills (URT, 2008).

In the past five years, enrolment of pupils with ASD has been increasing, though many children with autism are still kept in-doors due to myths and a culture which prohibits their participation in education and other societal activities. The primary school enrolment of children with disabilities was 0.3% (that is 24,584 pupils with disabilities out of 8,231,913 total enrolment) in 2013; 0.43% (37,034 pupils with disabilities out of 8,639,202 total enrolment) in 2016. The increasing enrolment of pupils with ASD is indicated in Table 9.1 and Table 9.2.

**Table 9.1: Number of pupils with ASD in Primary Schools in 2013**

| Pupils<br>by sex | Number of pupils in grade |           |            |           |          |           |            | Total | % of<br>Total |
|------------------|---------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|----------|-----------|------------|-------|---------------|
|                  | Std<br>I                  | Std<br>II | Std<br>III | Std<br>IV | Std<br>V | Std<br>VI | Std<br>VII |       |               |
| Male             | 93                        | 63        | 74         | 86        | 40       | 41        | 35         | 432   | 1.8           |
| Female           | 52                        | 41        | 55         | 62        | 36       | 34        | 34         | 314   | 1.3           |
| Total            | 145                       | 104       | 129        | 148       | 76       | 75        | 69         | 749   | 3.0           |

Source: URT (2013)

**Table 9.2: Number of Pupils with ASD in Primary Schools in 2016**

| Pupils<br>by sex | Number of pupils in grade |           |            |           |          |           |            | Total | % of<br>Total |
|------------------|---------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|----------|-----------|------------|-------|---------------|
|                  | Std<br>I                  | Std<br>II | Std<br>III | Std<br>IV | Std<br>V | Std<br>VI | Std<br>VII |       |               |
| Male             | 307                       | 75        | 73         | 53        | 39       | 35        | 20         | 602   | 1.6           |
| Female           | 195                       | 57        | 44         | 43        | 26       | 21        | 15         | 401   | 1.1           |
| Total            | 502                       | 132       | 117        | 96        | 65       | 56        | 35         | 1003  | 2.7           |

Source: URT (2016)

The available statistics and initiatives to support provision of primary education for pupils with ASD in Tanzania, such as the establishment of special schools and units in the inclusive settings and the introduction of syllabi for pupils with mental disabilities as of 2008, indicate that the government and private sector have realised the need for educating pupils with ASD, as is the case with other ordinary pupils (URT, 2008; Mmariet al., 2008; Mboya et al., 2008; Polat & Kisanji, 2009). However, less has been documented on the teaching and learning environment for pupils with ASD. This study therefore intended to assess educational opportunities and quality of education for pupils with ASD in selected primary schools in Tanzania.

## Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this study was to assess educational opportunities and quality of education for pupils with ASD in selected primary schools in Tanzania. Specific objectives were:

- i) To examine the appropriateness of teaching and learning resources for pupils with ASD in primary schools.
- ii) To assess teaching and learning approaches employed in primary schools for enhancing learning capabilities of pupils with ASD in selected primary schools.
- iii) To identify challenges and strategies suitable for enabling pupils with ASD to acquire quality primary education in Tanzania.

## Methodology

The study employed a descriptive case study design and is an example of qualitative research intended to understand the social world from the viewpoint of the special education teachers who are part of the phenomena under investigation. This qualitative approach enabled the gathering of a wealth of detailed information from a small number of

special education teachers who worked with pupils with ASD for many years. A qualitative case study approach provides insight into how people make sense of their experiences, insight which cannot be easily provided by other research methods (Merriam, 1998).

The study was conducted in four primary schools: Mbuyuni and Msimbazi Mseto (Dar es Salaam region), and Itiji and Kilimo (Mbeya region). These schools and regions were purposefully selected because of their socio-economic differences. The researcher employed purposive sampling techniques. The selection of this technique was based on the required information and nature of cases under investigation. The research data were collected using questionnaires, interviews, and observations.

## Results and Discussion

In the light of the research objectives, three major findings are presented. First, the findings revealed that primary schools surveyed were faced with an acute shortage of teaching and learning resources for learners with ASD that impaired the acquisition of the intended knowledge and skills. To assess the teaching and learning resources, they were categorised into four groups for observation. The groups included visual availability and placement, furniture and fittings, learning environment, and teaching and learning resources for selected tasks (number skills, vocational skills and communication skills).

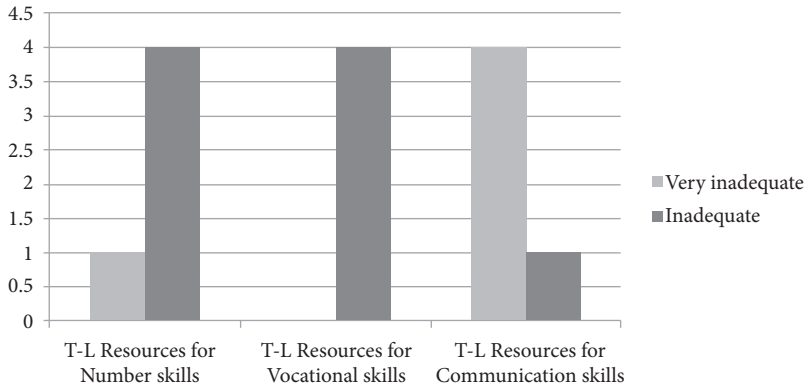
These findings indicate that classes neither were supportive nor attracted pupils with ASD to engage actively in learning processes. For instance, teaching and learning resources for the three selected tasks were found inadequately supplied, as indicated in Figure 9.1.

Figure 9.1 exhibits the extreme shortage of teaching and learning resources for specific skills for pupils with ASD. Teaching and learning of skills cannot be achieved as efficiently as planned due to the acute shortage of teaching and learning resources. Generally, learning environments were not supportive and not learner friendly. In all the schools, there were insufficient desks which were arranged similarly to classes of ordinary pupils. From these observations, it is apparent that pupils with ASD in studied schools were learning in very difficult conditions.

Secondly, the findings show that teaching and learning approaches used in schools were less appropriate and did not capture learning needs of the pupils with ASD. During interviews, informants presented at length on the types of teaching and learning approaches used in



**Fig. 9.1: Availability of Teaching and Learning Resources for the Three Selected Tasks**



teaching and learning for pupils with ASD and their appropriateness in achieving the stated learning objectives. With differing opinions and experiences among special education teachers, it appeared that teaching and learning approaches used were not very effective in supporting learning for pupils with ASD. For example, one special education teacher from Msimbazi Mseto primary school observed the following:

“...In our day-to-day teaching we have failed to apply teaching strategies that accommodate pupils with autism spectrum disorder. Those that are required should cater for learners’ individual needs. For example, the individual needs may be to remediate skill deficits and reduce challenging behaviour. The individualised teaching takes into account the learning needs of pupils with autism spectrum disorder and is considered as the best teaching practice. The difficult part is on executing this strategy in the big classes that we have and teachers available are not sufficient to help pupils with autism spectrum disorder on an individual basis.”

In the same vein, another special education teacher from Itiji primary school maintained that:

“...Sometimes application of teaching and learning strategies is complicated by communication problems of pupils with autism spectrum disorder, particularly autistic children, so that teachers need to adopt facilitative strategies such as an individualised instruction approach. This approach focusing on what the child is attending to recognising and interpreting attempts to learning tasks, creating predictable routines and use of teaching and learning resources in making easier interaction and elaborations.”

Similarly, the head teacher of Msimbazi Mseto primary school remarked:

“...Being in inclusive education, teaching of the pupils with autism spectrum disorder needs to be done in collaboration with other parties such as teachers, members of the community and the parent. In inclusive schools, teachers are often busy when the class includes several learners with special needs, such as pupils with autism spectrum disorder. When problem behaviours are also present, this can quickly become an unsustainable situation and, complicate teachers fulfilling their duties. Therefore it would be wise for the responsible parties (that is, the government and other education providers) to ensure that regular teachers as well as special education teachers are well informed on effective teaching and learning approaches for pupils with autism spectrum disorder.”

From these interviews, it is evident that teaching and learning approaches that were supposed to be used were not kept in practice. Findings clearly indicate that special education teachers need to be equipped with enough knowledge and skills to execute most effective teaching and learning approaches for pupils with ASD in primary schools.

Thirdly, the study found a number of educational challenges to acquiring quality primary education in Tanzania, affecting pupils with ASD. Table 9.3 presents a list of educational challenges as put forward by special education teachers in the studied schools.

**Table 9.3: Educational Challenges Mentioned by Special Education Teachers**

| S/N | Educational challenges                                                        |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | Lack of special education teachers in schools                                 |
| 2   | Acute shortage of teaching and learning resources                             |
| 3   | Lack of funds for supporting educational requirements for pupils with ASD     |
| 4   | Lack of knowledge to parents on handling educational needs of pupils with ASD |
| 5   | Little incentives given to teachers dealing with learners with special needs  |

Lack of special education teachers in schools is one of the major educational challenges that hinder provision of primary education to pupils with ASD in Tanzania. It is an irrefutable fact that with the increase of pupils with ASD, the number of special education teachers was supposed to be increased to match the requirement of the current number of pupils with ASD in primary schools. Availability of a

sufficient number of special education teachers is essentially important in order to handle their academic needs, as well as social needs, in school environments. The shortage of special education teachers and supporting staff observed in the surveyed schools complicated provision of services for the pupils and therefore endangered the quality of education acquired by the pupils with ASD.

Based on knowledge and teaching experiences of teachers, it was revealed that teaching and learning for autistic and mentally retarded children comprises several education challenges that require collective measures in addressing them. Despite the challenges in provision of primary education for pupils with ASD, access to primary education for pupils with ASD is fundamentally beneficial in enabling them to acquire essential knowledge and skills to live independent lives.

## **Conclusion**

In light of the findings of this study, three key conclusions are made. First, the teaching and learning resources were less appropriate for the learning needs of pupils with ASD. It was found that even for the little resources available, they were not relevant for the educational needs of the pupils with ASD. So in order to address their educational needs, enough teaching and learning resources should be supplied, and in appropriate ratios. Second, in almost all studied schools, special education teachers acknowledge that teaching and learning approaches used were ineffective for enabling pupils with ASD to acquire high-quality education. This calls for special attention in training special education teachers with competencies in handling educational needs for pupils with ASD. Third, provision of primary education for pupils with ASD poses several challenges, such as lack of special education teachers, insufficient supply of teaching and learning resources, and lack of knowledge of parents in handling learning needs for pupils with ASD.

## **Recommendations**

The study therefore, recommends the training and employment of more special needs education teachers specialising in ASD in order to increase their numbers in various levels of education. The government of Tanzania and concerned parties (teacher training colleges and universities) should introduce pre-service and in-service training for preparation of special education teachers so that they are equipped with necessary knowledge and skills on how to enable pupils with ASD to learn in a desired manner.

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## CHAPTER 10

# **Modelling Initiatives and Challenges in ICT Development in Teaching and Learning in Secondary Schools: Mbeya City**

*Peter E. Tengaa*

### **Abstract**

This paper examined awareness of the use of ICT factors contributing to ICT development in teaching and learning in secondary schools. Study objectives were to examine the level of awareness on the use of ICT tools among teachers in secondary schools, to identify government initiatives in establishment of ICT programmes in secondary schools in Tanzania and to analyse factors affecting government initiatives on the implementation of ICT programmes in secondary schools in Tanzania. The study used 10 secondary schools to collect information on ICT trends from ICT teachers and some heads of schools in surveyed schools. Purposive and simple, random sampling techniques were used to select respondents. Questionnaires, interviews and observations were used to collect primary data. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel were used to analyse quantitative data, while content analysis was used in analysing qualitative data. Study findings show that awareness on ICT is high but there are very few ICT teachers

studying pure ICT courses in colleges. The study also found that the Tanzanian government is carrying out constructive initiatives in making sure that ICT is taught in secondary school with practical content to assure competency among secondary school students. Initiatives such as distribution of computers in different schools have raised the capacity of secondary schools in equipping students with ICT skills. Financial resources are seen as the major drawback towards implementation of ICT programmes into secondary school. The study recommends that government should ensure that the ICT syllabus for secondary school and all schools be installed with ICT tools. Moreover, government should formulate combinations which have ICT as an option in advanced levels.

**Keywords:** *ICT initiatives, challenges*

Information and communication technology (ICT) is now a common phenomenon in many aspects of life. Specifically in the education sector, technology in primary and secondary education has drawn special attention although it has not been as widely covered compared to higher learning, both globally and locally (Wangila, 2015). Technology in education is not, and will never be, transformative on its own without teachers who can integrate ICT to match with their curriculums for the purpose of improving learning processes. Once technology is used appropriately and effectively, the value of development programs in teaching becomes applicable to the students (Carlson, 2002).

In most developing countries, education is related to human development, which is why attention to the use of ICT in enhancing teaching has been projected. However, secondary education ICT delivery faces a number of constraints, including shortage of qualified school teachers, lack of reading and teaching materials, as well as poor financial support for learning activities. Whenever technology happens to increase, teachers' on the job training and professional development form a part of simulations of good teaching practice and increase productivity of non- instructional tasks. Teaching professionals becomes absolutely essential once ICT is made available if it is to be effectively utilised in secondary schools. Global experience shows that, in developing, industrialised, and information-based countries, training on the use of ICT among teachers is vital for improvement of students' performance on the part of skills advancement and knowledge acquisition (Carlson, 2002).

ICT in secondary education delivery has multiple impacts such as reaching remote students with poor or no access, enacting students with emerging ICT skills, together with cost cutting in education deliverance

(UNESCO, 2014). Barakabitze et al. (2015) argue that, when primary and secondary schools make proper use of ICT in teaching, academic excellence of students in particular schools can be easily obtained.

Poor economies of developing countries like Tanzania have been affecting initiatives on the integration of ICT into curriculums of primary and secondary schools on a large scale, and these initiatives should be continued if desired goals are to be achieved.

## **Statement of the Problem**

Though ICT has been widely used in education delivery, most African countries such as Tanzania still encounter challenges in respect of the increased cost of implementing and running ICT facilities for enhancing secondary education deliverance (Souter et al., 2012). Wangila (2015) comments that limited financial resources remain a stiff barrier towards the establishment of ICT use in secondary schools in most developing countries.

In Tanzania, initiatives to establish and improve ICT tools in secondary schools have been in progress since 2002. The government of Tanzania, through the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Vocational Training, has managed to make ICT tools available in some primary and secondary schools but failed to establish fully fledged integration of ICT in the said schools because of financial problems (Barakabitze et al, 2015).

## **Objectives of the Study**

- i) To assess the level of awareness on the use of ICT tools among teachers in secondary schools in Tanzania.
- ii) To identify government initiatives in the establishment of ICT programmes in secondary schools in Tanzania.
- iii) To examine factors affecting government initiatives on the establishment of ICT programmes in secondary schools in Tanzania.

## **Research Questions**

- What is the level of awareness on the use of ICT tools among teachers in secondary schools?
- What initiatives have been taken by the Tanzania government on the establishment of ICT programmes in secondary schools?
- What factors affect Tanzanian government initiatives on the establishment of ICT programmes in secondary schools?

## **Literature Review**

### **Secondary school teachers' awareness on the use of ICT tools**

Teachers' development in the use of ICTs has been identified as the main contributing factor in effective use of ICT in secondary schools (Adeyinka, 2007). In secondary schools, teachers have been found to have knowledge of computers and they have a passion for the use of computers and understand the importance of computers in the teaching and learning process. There is a need for more emphasis on ICT training among teachers in secondary schools though, as far as teachers continuing professional development is concerned (McCarney, 2004). Most secondary school teachers who have succeeded in ICT usage are those who undertook development programmes that have helped them to involve students in explaining and demonstrating ICT practically in the class while teaching, since they viewed ICT as a vital tool for teaching and learning (UNESCO, 2014).

### **Tanzania initiatives on the establishment of ICT programmes in secondary schools**

Though financial resources have been utilised to establish ICT programmes in primary and secondary schools, students who are pursuing their studies at particular schools are not fully ICT literate (Parvin, 2013). Recently, Tanzania has completed its policy on ICT that controls primary and secondary education delivery by incorporating ICT programmes. The policy is concentrated on information infrastructure, content and curriculum development, administration, and planning and management in supporting education monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (Hare, 2007).

### **Tanzania ICT policy on education**

In Tanzania, ICT is regarded as having the potential to enhance effectiveness in delivering formal and non-formal education. However, this effectiveness is manifested mostly in some primary and secondary schools, as well as in higher learning institutions in urban areas of Tanzania. Recently, a few educational institutions, mostly private, have incorporated the use of ICT in education delivery. Colleges and universities have inadequate ICT facilities and bandwidth to meet real demand. The government of Tanzania, in collaboration with other stakeholders, has taken various initiatives to promote the use of ICT in primary and secondary schools. In addition, the inadequacy of effective



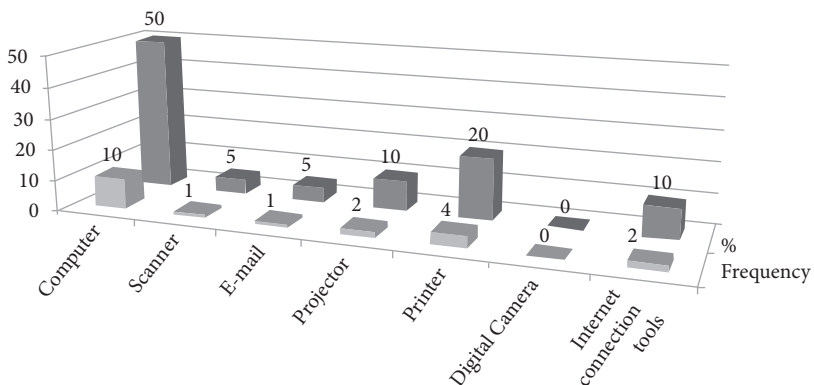
programmes for primary and secondary teachers' training, particularly in computers and other multi-media utilisation, has been identified as a major reason for the slow take-up of ICT in education. Furthermore, the desire to unleash the potential of ICT in education delivery in Tanzania should be undertaken so as to avoid the numerous pitfalls seen in other African countries. Experience drawn from other countries' attempts to utilise ICT in education should provide Tanzania with useful lessons and reasons for exercising carefulness in how it deploys ICT in primary and secondary school education.

## Discussion

### Awareness on ICT facilities

This study concerns itself with knowing whether secondary school teachers have knowledge on the use of the most commonly used ICT facilities in teaching and learning. ICT teachers and heads of schools indicate that secondary school teachers are aware of ICT facilities that are used in teaching and learning. The findings show that secondary school teachers possess ICT knowledge on the use of some ICT facilities involved in teaching and learning, but such knowledge differs from one teacher to another with regard to the ICT background of particular teachers. The involved ICT facilities were computers, printers, Internet connection tools (modem, wireless tools and cable wires), software and projectors. It was found that computers were the ICT facility most known to secondary school teachers at 10 (50%) of the respondents, with 4 (20%) of the respondents knowing printers. Figure 10.1 below has more details on the known ICT facilities.

**Figure 10.1: ICT Facilities Awareness**



Source: Field data (2016)

The results prove that, in most of secondary schools, computers are the ICT facilities most familiar to teachers. The researcher believes that the reason computers are the most known ICT facility is because they are available in most schools for ICT facilitation services to students. Computers for accessing learning and teaching materials through the Internet have increased in popularity among secondary school teachers compared to other ICT facilities. Elaborating on the awareness of ICT knowledge in using related facilities, most of the respondents said that:

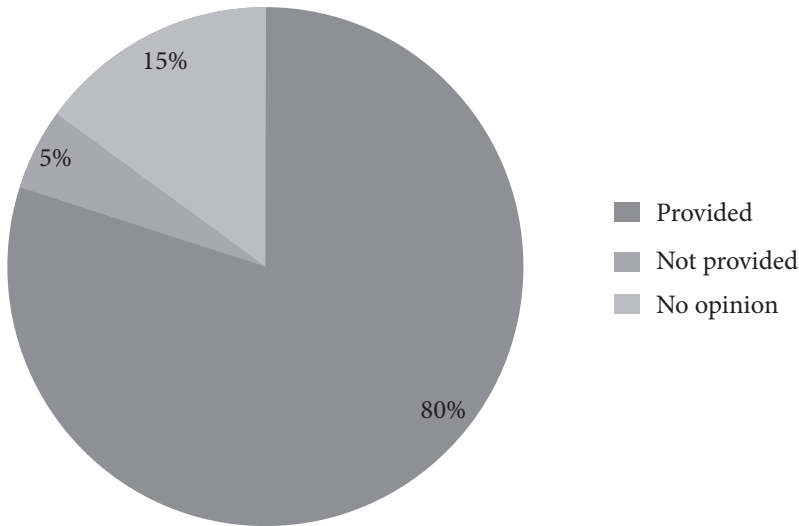
“It is very rare to find a secondary school teacher who is purely an ICT professional due to the scarcity of science teachers, that is why we accommodate teachers who have gone through ICT related subjects in their colleges to assist in impacting basic knowledge on ICT issues to our students.”

### Government Initiatives on ICT in Secondary Schools

#### Provision of ICT based syllabus

Respondents agreed that the government had made and is still undertaking constructive initiatives to ensure that secondary schools in Tanzania are well equipped with ICT facilities. Many respondents agreed that there is a syllabus for secondary school, with 16 (80%) of the respondents agreeing that the syllabus exists but it is just used for the knowledge provision. Figure 10.2 has more details on the provision of a basic education syllabus.

Figure 10.2: Provision of ICT Based Syllabus

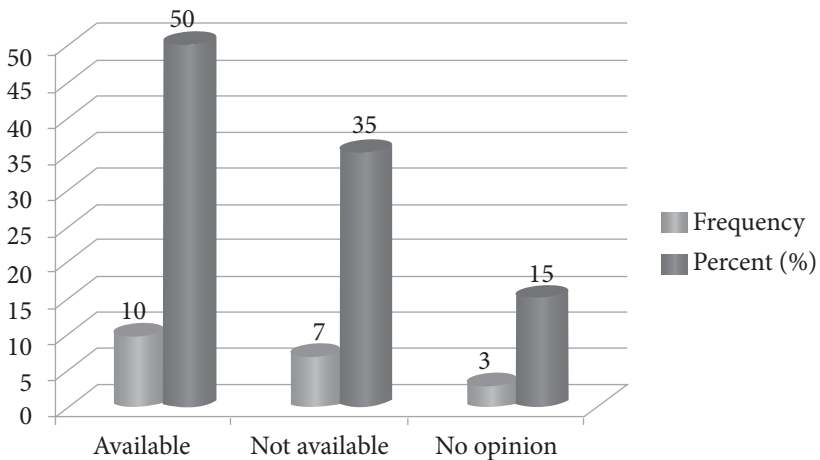


Results confirm that, in most of the secondary schools, there exists an ICT based syllabus but, due to different challenges to do with infrastructure, the syllabus is not well implemented.

### ICT policy for basic education

Respondents were much conscious of the ICT Policy, and the government has a good ICT Policy. Tanzania has made and is still making fruitful and resourceful policy on ICT. Many respondents agreed that the ICT Policy is available. Half – 10 (50%) – of the respondents agreed that the policy that exists is resourceful. Figure 10.3 has more details on ICT Policy.

**Figure 10.3: ICT Policy for Basic Education**



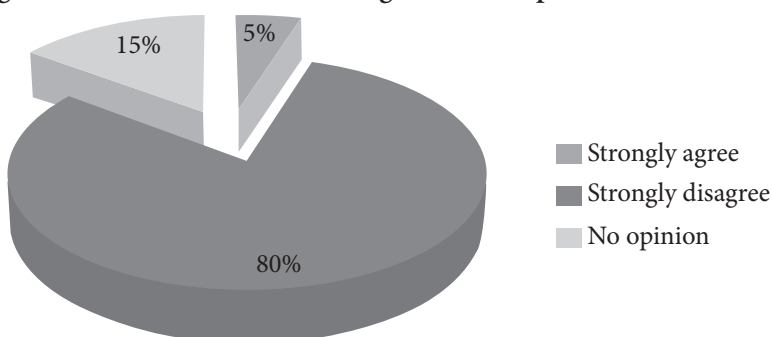
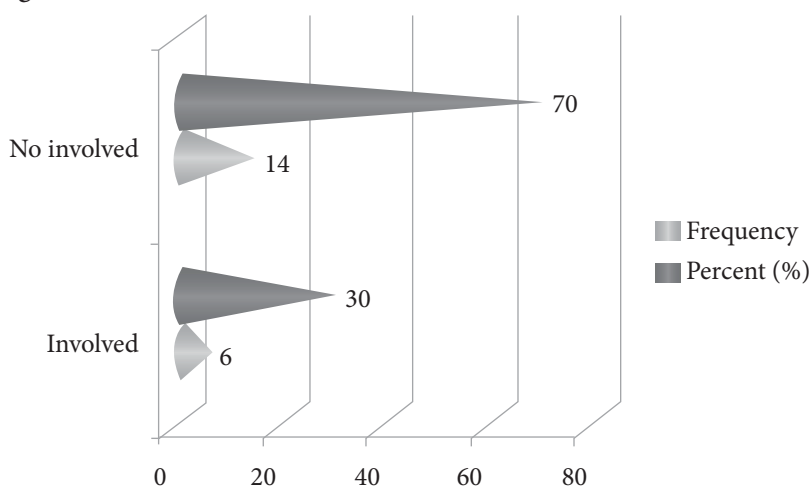
Results confirm that the government initiatives are productive in most secondary schools.

### ICT Teachers training and development

Figure 10.4 reports that 80% of teachers strongly disagreed that there is no ICT training and development provided in schools, while 5% agree that in schools there is no training and development provided.

### NGOs, educational stakeholders and practitioners

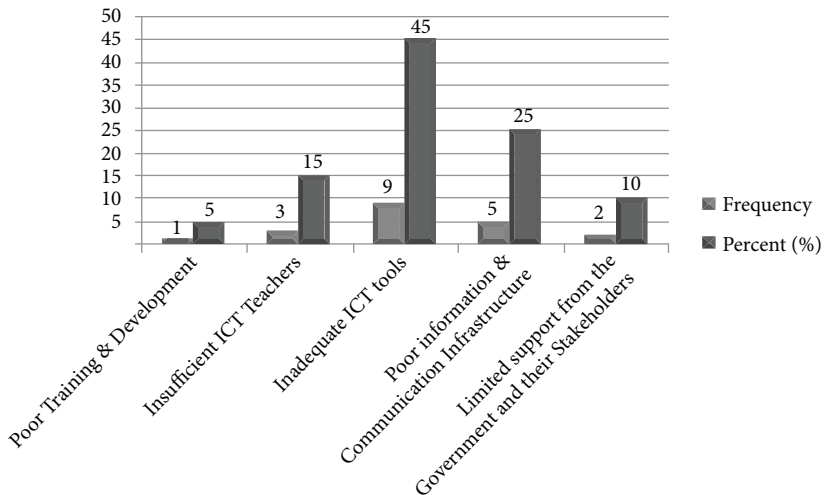
Figure 10.5 reports that 14 (70%) of the teachers strongly agreed that NGOs, educational stakeholders and educational practitioners are not involved in development of ICT in secondary schools, while 6 (30%) agreed that they are involved.

**Figure 10.4: ICT Teachers Training and Development****Figure 10.5: NGOs, Educational Stakeholders and Practitioners**

### Challenges with ICT use

Figure 10.6 reports that 9 (45%) of the teachers had intensely agreed that inadequacy of ICT tools is a big challenge hindering the development of ICT in secondary schools, whilst poor ICT infrastructure is also a big challenge, as is insufficient ICT teachers. Speaking on government initiatives, a head of school had the following to say:

“We really appreciate efforts that government has placed on ensuring that ICT programmes are incorporated into secondary school curriculum but lack of continuity support in the running of ICT programmes, insufficient ICT teachers, poor ICT infrastructure, as well as limited funds to support ICT training for teachers have become stumbling blocks for the development of ICT in secondary schools.”

**Figure 10.6: Challenges with ICT Use**

## Conclusion

There is awareness on the use of ICT tools among ICT teachers in secondary schools, though the extent of such awareness is still questionable. Computers are the most known ICT facility among secondary school teachers, despite the fact that there are other ICT facilities such as projectors, scanners and printers that can also be used in teaching and learning. Secondary schools (both community and public ones) appreciate government initiatives for ensuring that ICT programmes stand still in teaching and learning in primary schools, but they urge that more support from the government be forthcoming, especially continuity support in the running of this programme. ICT has evolved to be the biggest driving force behind development. Applying ICT to empower education is considered to be a necessity in order to overcome the challenges facing the education sector. ICT is becoming more and more integrated in society and opening new opportunities for people on a daily basis, but it needs more support from the government, stakeholders and education practitioners to run the programme.

## Recommendations

- The government should ensure that the ICT syllabus for secondary school is effectively implemented so as to equip students with ICT knowledge.
- Secondary schools having installed ICT tools should start doing National

- In advanced levels, the government should formulate a combination which has an ICT option.
- The government should place more efforts on the provision of ICT tools together with reliable electricity in rural and urban areas, and internet connectivity in secondary schools. This in turn helps in delivering practical ICT based skills to secondary school students.

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## CHAPTER 11

# **The Impact of Social Media Networks on Education in Higher Learning Institutions in Tanzania: A Case Study**

*Steven Alexander Mavere*

### **Abstract**

This paper describes the impact of social media networks on education in higher learning institutions in Tanzania. This is worth exploring since there are a great number of higher learning students and facilitators who are using social media networks such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc. in their daily social and academic life; and for the past 10 years the usage and adoption of social media networks has been and is increasing tremendously. Most of these higher learning students, lecturers and facilitators spend a great amount of time on social media networks such as Facebook and WhatsApp, which in turn increases or decreases their concentration on academic issues and performance.

The aim of this paper is to investigate the impact of social media networks on education in higher learning institutions in Tanzania and the objective of this study is to investigate the linkage between students' performance and usage of social media networks.



The paper interrogates the hypothesis: Students using social media networks for academic purposes have better performances. The paper used a case study approach and quantitative method and independent sample test to test the stated hypothesis. The research used the questionnaire and interview method of primary data collection and managed to get responses from 60 students from different higher learning institutions as a sample. The study revealed that the usage of social media networks has an impact on education and students' performance both positively and negatively, depending on the intent of the student.

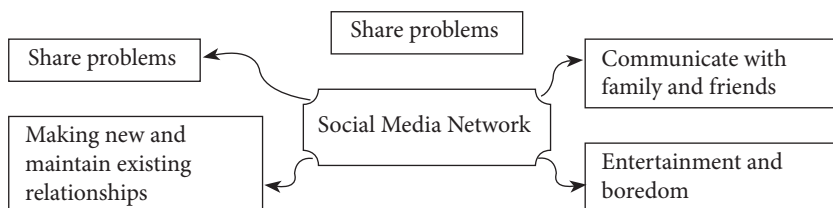
The study therefore recommends that a limit or ban on social media use by higher learning students to some extent should be applied so as to reduce or remove the negative impact of social media on education and students' performance; and the positive impact of social media networks on education and student performance should be capitalised upon and enhanced so as to provide a better education system through the use of social media networks and other information and communication technology, and related technologies.

## **Introduction**

Social media networks in Tanzania have made the internet an innovative way for individuals and families to communicate. Social media networks have created a phenomenon on the internet that has gained popularity over the last decade. People use social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace to create and sustain relationships with others (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

Nowadays many students use social media networks for communication – in particular, higher learning institutions' students form a large proportion of users on social media networks. Lenhart et al. (2010) found that 72% of all college students have a social media profile, with 45% of college students using a social media site at least once a day. People use social media sites for a variety of reasons, the leading reasons being ease of use, allowing rapid updating, analysing and sharing continuously increasing information, reflecting on daily life, establishing and maintaining spontaneous social contacts and relationships, supporting informal learning practices with interaction and communication, and facilitating delivery of education (Mazman & Usruel, 2011).

**Figure 11.1: Current Uses of Social Media Networks by Students in Higher Learning Institutions**



Source: Author

## Research Question

With the ideas above, this research is set to explore the following: How do social media networks affect the performance of candidates?

### Social media networks use

Social network sites “offer personalisation of users’ public persona” with interactive sharing of that information with that person’s networks. The digital publisher enables communication through a social media that constructs “digital identities” (Acquisti & Gross, 2006). Also, Noor Al-Daeem and Hendricks (2013: 57) discuss and query social media network use in terms of “to what extent ... *these processes enhance formal learning processes and how?*”

For example, a study about Facebook has found out that maintaining contact with friends is one of the primary reasons for using the system (Noor Al-Daeem & Hendricks, 2013).

Among other findings, they noted that users viewed the social network as “a convenient and efficient way to enforce relationships and to share information quickly to many individuals” (Noor Al-Daeem & Hendricks, 2013). From the above explanations about social media uses, all writings focus on social media use as a way to create or maintain relationships with little or no uses for education at all.

### Social media’s effect on students’ performances

In the higher education environment, social media can be beneficial to current and potential students in numerous ways. This starts as early as the day an individual looks for college application, and lasts until the person gets ready for the job market (Noor Al-Daeem & Hendricks, 2013). Students spend hours chatting with their friends and browsing profiles on social networking sites instead of focusing on reading material that is beneficial to their academic life. It becomes a compulsive habit for

students to visit their own profile frequently and several times in a day to check what has been posted and to check friends' updates, changing status, and commenting on others photos and videos (Das & Sahoo, n.d.). Finally it diverts student attention from their responsibility as students toward academic life in their respective higher learning institutions.

There is a growing body of studies emphasising that individuals are embedded in their societies. Thus, the related social structure, though sometimes invisible, is often associated with instrumental outcomes, including power, innovation, learning outcomes, and job performance (Yang & Tang, 2003:95). In a university course, Guldner and Stone Winestock empirically demonstrated that appropriate arrangement of groups according to each student's position in a social network might increase the student's learning satisfaction and academic performance (Yang & Tang, 2003). In social network analysis, these resource exchanges are termed "relations." Some positive and negative relations are assumed to be related to an individual's performance (Yang & Tang, 2003:95).

The above discussion about the effect of social media on students' performance, as discussed by various researchers, finds that social media has the following effect on students' performance: Social media networks divert students' attention from their responsibility as students and academic life in their respective higher learning institutions.

However, appropriate arrangement of groups according to each student's position in a social network might increase the student's learning satisfaction and academic performance, involving resource exchanges that are termed "relations." Some positive and negative relations are assumed to be related to an individual's performance (Yang & Tang, 2003).

## Research Hypothesis

The hypothesis as defined by Kothari (2004:184) "may be a proposition or a set of propositions set forth as an explanation for the occurrence of some specified group of phenomena either asserted merely as a provisional conjecture to guide some investigation or accepted as highly probable in the light of established facts". Quite often, as explained by Kothari (2004), a research hypothesis is a predictive statement, capable of being tested by scientific methods, that relates an independent sample t-test variable to some dependent variable (Kothari, 2004). The researcher had the following null hypothesis:

$H_0$ : Students using social media networks for academic purposes have better performance.

## Theoretical Framework

This section explores the theoretical grounding enabling a better understanding of the study and analysis of the factors that relate to the impact of social media networks on education and students' performance.

**Figure 11.2: Theoretical Framework**



Source: Author

As illustrated, social media network use depends on the mentioned factor 'education', and the use of social media is a dependent variable which needs the existence of education. Education is an independent variable. On the other hand, academic performance depends upon the use of social media; in this case academic performance depends upon social media networks, and thus use of social media networks is an independent variable and academic performance is a dependent variable.

## Methods

### Research approach

This study used a quantitative based approach in investigating the impact of social media networks on education. A case study which included social media network users from higher learning institutions in Tanzania was followed, and this approach is considered to be appropriate for this study, given the purpose of the research and the nature of this research.

### Research design

"A research design is the arrangement of conditions for the collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure." Also, a research design is discussed as "the conceptual structure within which research is conducted; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. As such the design includes an outline of what the researcher will do, from writing the hypothesis, and its operational implications for the final analysis of data" (Kothari, 2004:31).

Cassell and Symon (2004: 326) define research design as "the argument for the logical steps which will be taken to link the research question(s) and issues to data collection, analysis and interpretation in a coherent way". The research design for this study follows a series of

logical steps from the stated hypothesis and the research questions to data collection, analysis and interpretation in a coherent way that gives relevance to the research purpose and the meaning to this study.

### Participants

This study sampled students from different higher learning institutions in Tanzania and examined how they use social media for their academic and performance benefits.

The reason for using more than one higher learning institution as a case study is to capture the diversity and promote generalisability.

### Instrumentation

For this study, the main instruments used in data collection were questionnaires, observation and interviews. The secondary data were compiled from published journals and the internet, as shown in Table 11.1.

**Table 11.1: Data Collection Instruments**

|   |               |           |                                                    |
|---|---------------|-----------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Interview     | Primary   | Students                                           |
| 2 | Questionnaire | Primary   | Students                                           |
| 3 | Observation   | Primary   | Researcher                                         |
| 4 | Documents     | Secondary | Published journals, the internet and text analysis |

Source: Author

### Presentation of data

A total of 60 students was surveyed for the study. Respondents from different higher learning institutions were involved.

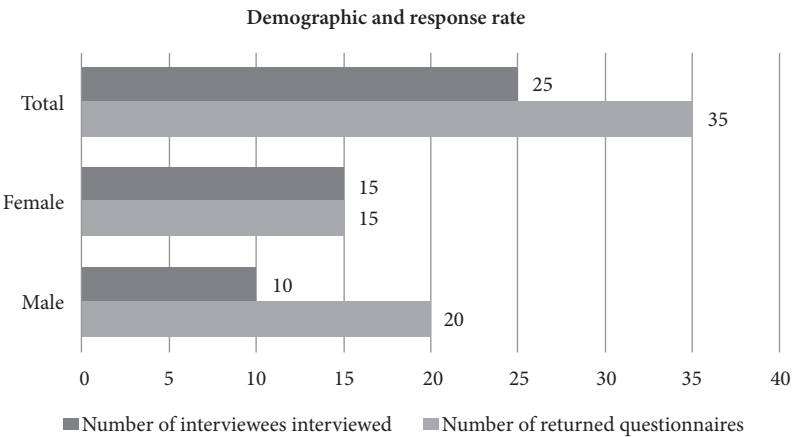
The following are the research questions findings from the analysed data:

**Table 11.2: Response Rate**

(Expected number of respondents Male= 30 Female = 30)

| Gender | Number of returned questionnaires | Number of interviewees interviewed | Actual Respondents | Expected Respondents |
|--------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Male   | 20                                | 10                                 | 30 (75%)           | 40 (100%)            |
| Female | 15                                | 15                                 | 30 (75%)           | 40 (100%)            |
| Total  | 35                                | 25                                 | 60 (75%)           | 80 (100%)            |

Figure 11.3: Response Rate



Methods for testing the hypothesis

The T-independent sample test is used to test the hypotheses and each hypothesis is being tested independently.

Social media network effect on performance of candidates

Null hypothesis H0: Students using social media networks for academic purpose have better performance.

Table 11.3: Participants’ Answers to Research Question 1

*How do social media networks affect the performance of candidates?*

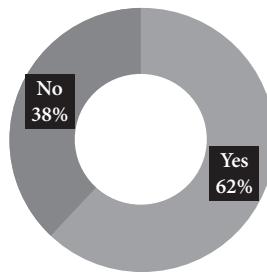
|                                                                                                                                                                    |              |       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------|
| Social media has negative impact on student performance                                                                                                            | Yes          | No    |
|                                                                                                                                                                    | 60.3%        | 36.9% |
| Questionnaire and Interview responses                                                                                                                              | Participants |       |
|                                                                                                                                                                    | Yes          | No    |
| Social media reduces capability to research, retain information and focus on learning since students rely on the accessibility of information and answers from it. | 40           | 20    |
| Students who use social media while studying show reduced academic performance since there is no concentration on the task at hand.                                | 36           | 24    |
| Social media increases the rate of communication and collaboration between students which increases group learning practices.                                      | 35           | 25    |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                               |             |             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Student's motivational level is reduced due to the extensive use of these social networking sites since students rely on the virtual knowledge instead of gaining real practical knowledge of the real world. | 31          | 29          |
| Students who use social media tend to write using word shortcuts which reduce a student's ability to effectively write proper words and use proper grammar in their writings.                                 | 43          | 17          |
| Students who use social media tend to develop more familiarity with computers and electronics which increase performances in their computer and electronic related studies.                                   | 32          | 18          |
| <b>Average</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>36.2</b> | <b>22.2</b> |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>217</b>  | <b>133</b>  |
| <b>Percent</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>60.3</b> | <b>36.9</b> |

Source: Author

**Figure 11.4: Participants Answers to Research Question 1**

Social media has negative impact on students academic performance



Source: Author

**Table 11.4: t-test**

|                                    |     | Group Statistics |      |                |                 |
|------------------------------------|-----|------------------|------|----------------|-----------------|
| Social media effect on performance |     | N                | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
| Better performance                 | Yes | 217              | 1.35 | .477           | .032            |
|                                    | No  | 133              | 1.44 | .498           | .043            |

Interpretation of group statistics

The table 11.4 suggests that an average of 36.2 individuals out of 60 respondents disagreed that students using social media for academic purposes have better performance and the remaining 32.2 respondents agreed.

Table 11.5: Independent Samples Test

| Independent Samples Test                |                            |                    |               |  |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|---------------|--|
|                                         |                            | Better performance |               |  |
|                                         |                            | Equal              | Equal         |  |
|                                         |                            | variances          | variances not |  |
|                                         |                            | assumed            | assumed       |  |
| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | F                          | 8.587              |               |  |
|                                         | Sig.                       | .004               |               |  |
| T-test for Equality of Means            | T                          | -1.695             | -1.677        |  |
|                                         | Df                         | 348                | 269.961       |  |
|                                         | Sig. (2-tailed)            | .091               | .095          |  |
|                                         | Mean Difference            | -.090              | -.090         |  |
|                                         | Std. Error Difference      | .053               | .054          |  |
|                                         | 95% Lower                  | -.195              | -.197         |  |
|                                         | Confidence Upper           | .015               | .016          |  |
|                                         | Interval of the Difference |                    |               |  |

Interpretation of independent sample test

We therefore reject the null hypothesis that students using social media networks for academic purposes have better performance, since we have sufficient evidence that ( $p > .05$ ) If .095 when equal variance is not assumed at 5% significance level.

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare whether students using social media networks for academic purposes have better performance against students not using social media networks for academic purposes. These results suggest that students using social media networks for academic purposes have no better performance than those who don't use social media for academic purposes. Specifically, our results suggest that using social media for academic or non-academic purposes has negative impact on students' performance.

Interpretation of the statistical findings

The findings after testing this null hypothesis were as follows:



Sixty-two percent of 60 respondents agreed that social media has negative impacts on students who uses it for academic purposes and reduces students' performance, while the remaining 38% agreed that social media has positive impacts on students who use it for academic purposes.

## Discussion

The findings on the impact of social media networks on education in higher learning institutions suggest that many students use social media networks though it is not beneficial to the education and academic performances of individuals or group of students. This is important and significant since Lenhart et al. (2010) found that 71% of young adults have a Facebook account, and this is an opportunity for all education and social media parties and sectors to challenge themselves to see how they can try to integrate education and social media into a social media based or related education system which will enhance students' performance and the academic and education system at large. This can be seen as sending education content to students at the tips of their fingers.

The current study indicated that Facebook is the most popular social network due to its features and customization which attract many different users, including college institution and university students, and Facebook is still the social media network of choice, with 99% of college students using Facebook and 90% using email. As shown by Lenhart et al. (2010), education bodies could try to use Facebook as a pilot study and try implementing the integration of education and social media into a single system. The findings from this study also coincided with the research by Lenhart et al. (2010) which found that Facebook is the most popular form of social media network.

Many respondents and participants in this study indicated that though they have access to other social media networks such as WhatsApp, Viber, MySpace, LinkedIn, MyZamana and Twitter, what they update and use more is Facebook. As it has been found in research done by Sheldon (2008) and Quan-Haase and Young (2010), the majority of college students visited their social networking sites several times a day. This, together with other findings, indicates that the extent of usage of social media networks such as Facebook sites is frequent.

Several reasons were given for why college students were using social networking websites. As has been discussed by other researchers, the primary reason for the use of social media networks such as Facebook

was for communication, that is, to communicate with family and friends. The other reason given by other researchers was for entertainment and for reducing boredom; this and a few other reasons were also prominent for use of social media network sites.

These findings have also been discussed and supported by Sheldon (2008) who found that students use Facebook and other websites to pass time, be entertained, and maintain existing relationships with others.

## Conclusions

Social media networking in education is based on the fundamental premise that learning begins when students gain (and retain) interest in content to be learned. Nearly a hundred years ago, Dewey (1913) believed that interest in learning was not a “flavouring” that could be sprinkled on an otherwise boring subject (Noor Al-Daeem & Hendricks, 2013), which is true looking at the findings we have seen from this study; though most students in higher learning institutions use Facebook as their tool and means for communication, these uses do not help the students to improve their academic performance.

Dewey characterised one’s interest in content as an active or propulsive state based on real objects with high personal meaning. Little did Dewey know at the time that he was accurately describing the effects of today’s social media, which inherently require user engagement and interactivity (Noor Al-Daeem & Hendricks, 2013).

If social media is to be used in higher learning institutions to enhance education, improve the education system and performance of students, then it will require the parties concerned to take initiative and engage users.

Institutions of higher education should try to use social media such as Facebook in an effective way, providing a supportive infrastructure in which social networking activities can take place to enhance the cultivation of a community of learners, since there is a great number of students who use social media networks, and the number of users is increasing rapidly.

Nowadays students engage more in social media activities, and thus higher learning institutions should recognise the importance of utilisation of social media among students, as well as see the need for faculties and alumni to be integrated into social media so as to have an education system that is up to date and supports almost all users of that particular system.

This research shows that social media websites have created a phenomenon with millions of users over the past decade. Facebook and Twitter have emerged as the most popular social media sites and have continued to grow in popularity, as discussed by other researchers. These social media networks create new ways of communication with friends and family and also influence an individual's self-concept while offering new and innovative ways to communicate with other individuals quickly (Sponcil & Gitimu, n.d.). In addition, higher learning institution students in particular are users of social media networks and use the sites increasingly frequently and at a higher rate.

This study makes an important contribution to understanding the impact of social media networks on education in higher learning institutions, social media's impact on the performance of individual students, the appropriate time to be used on social media for better academic performance of students and the understanding of gender benefit in relation to social media use by higher learning institutions' students.

Social media networks have become a vital means of communication and are essential today in different societies and among groups of people, including higher learning institution students. But its use should not be motivated to the extent that it becomes the main means of communications between students, instructors and the education system at large, for as we have seen, it is not used to the benefit of individual students' performance. Even though it is used for academic purposes, it isn't that effective in increasing students' performance unless the students put in effort outside of just depending on social media networks such as Facebook to improve performance.

If the use of social media networks such as Facebook is not controlled, it could destroy and ruin the future of young men and women and have a bad impact on education, as has been seen and discussed above. It is almost impossible for any third party or any other group of people or community to control, monitor or check the actions performed by users and thus it is strongly advised and recommended to try and monitor and control young men and women's activities on social media networks so as to reduce social media addiction, which is not profitable to individual students, to the government and to the nation at large.

It is recommended that the government and international cyber justifications bodies and individuals take part in establishing policies and ban certain uses of social media for students at all education levels, and in particular higher learning institution students, especially

undergraduate students, for it seems they use social media for non-academic purposes which mostly lowers their education and academic performances. Parents should try to limit the social media use of their children and strictly ban the use of social media networks by their young children so as to secure their future.

Thus, the findings show us that though higher learning students use social media networks, whether for academic or non-academic purposes, social media networks such as Facebook have no benefit in any way that is noticeable, appreciated and acknowledged in student performance. Moreover, there is no guarantee that using social media networks such as Facebook for an average of less than two hours per day is enough for better performance. Also, there is no particular gender that particularly benefits academically from the use of social media networks.

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## CHAPTER 12

# Exploring the Potential of Open Door Management Policy as a New Approach to Governance of Higher Learning Institutions in Tanzania

*Paul Loisulie*

### **Abstract**

This paper presents and discusses personal leadership experiences and reflections on how Open Door Management Policy (ODMP) was applied in one of the higher learning institutions (HLI) in Tanzania. The paper uses Scholarly Personal Narrative (methodology) to relate the changing nature and the role of open door policy since its inception to the present, and how it can influence management practices in higher learning institutions. It highlights its historical background and later applications in management and administration of organisations. The potential of information and communication technology as a catalyst to adopt and implement open door management policy in higher learning institutions is categorically indicated. The main point emphasised in this paper is access to information by all stakeholders as a means of ensuring transparency and openness. The paper explains how open door management policy can be implemented, and the challenges facing its implementation, concluding by suggesting that more emphasis be put on the necessity of ODMP in HLIs today.

**Key Words:** *Open door management policy, information and communication technology, transparency*

## **Introduction**

Open door policy is a concept that emerged in the late 19th and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries to explain trade relations between China and all countries on an equal basis. It aimed at countering one powerful country having total control over China. Later the term broadened its use to refer to corporate communication whereby the boss leaves the door open to encourage transparency and openness for employees. This paper analyses the general characteristics of open door policy and discusses how it can be applied in governance of higher learning institutions, taking examples and experiences from the University of Dodoma (UDOM) in Tanzania. Open door policy is figuratively used to refer to the decision of the person in power to make himself or herself available at all times for anyone who wants to talk to him or her. This practice is not confined to the availability of the boss alone but broad involvement of people in all policy functions and decision-making. It is supposed to be reflected in all general functions of the organisation, such as meetings, communication and other functions. The reason for adopting this leadership style is simply to encourage transparency and openness. Employees can promote open door policy through their trade unions and associations. In the current world that is dominated by knowledge economy, employees can influence decisions through information and communication technologies (ICTs).

In this paper, open door management policy (ODMP) builds on the foundations of transparency, which is considered an aspect of good governance. Scholars conceptualize transparency as the extent to which information related to an institution's processes, procedures, functioning and performance are made accessible to all stakeholders. Transparency can also be conceived as a central value of democratic, accountable organisations (Curtin and Meijer, 2006; Grimmelikhuijsen, 2010). The main reason for using transparency as a building block for open door management policy is the fact that, without transparency, very little or nothing can be achieved with the proposed approach. The concept of openness as an approach to management and administration has been used in government operations around the world following the evolution and improvements of ICTs. The force behind using this concept in government operations is the belief that it ensures accountability and legitimacy. Different governments have introduced

openness in their operations through different names. In Tanzania, it is known as open government partnership (OGP), as viewed in all public institution websites. Obama's administration launched OGP, or the Open Government Directive, in 2009, and the UK government launched the Open Government License in 2011 (Rodrigo, 2011).

According to Rodrigo (2011), there are three directions that help understanding and implementation of open government systems. These directions are freedom of information perspectives, openness as information tool and detailed data. Freedom of information perspective is based on the legal rights that citizens have to access government information. Openness as an information tool means the search to declassify information and stewardship of information. Detailed data is based on the open data path, which will lead to opening the input or the gross data that is used by government officials and to keeping it open for the citizen. All three directions can be used to ensure legitimacy and accountability in running of the government. Just like in government, these three directions can be applied in other institutions like those of higher education.

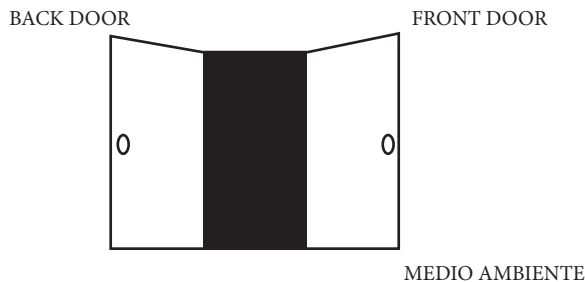
### **Role of ICT in Open Door Management Policy in Higher Learning Institutions**

ICT has a major influence on the implementation of ODMP in HLIs. Experiences from open government partnership initiatives practiced in the mentioned countries (Tanzania, UK and USA) portray a clear testimony that ICT can facilitate ODMP more quickly and in a smooth manner. The model developed by Easton (1965), containing five elements, explains open government partnership as a system process that enables interaction of information between the government and citizens. The components of the model are inputs, outputs, black box, environment and feedback. However, Rodrigo (2011) introduced the ideal part of the open government system approach, called the two-door perspective, as shown in Figure 1 below. This approach summarises how the five components work as a government open system. The back door focus represents the view that the government is the information owner, and all the data - developed, kept or retrieved by government officials - must be kept away from citizens. From this view, information is released drop by drop by government officials to the public. Full information cannot be released through websites and other ICT tools. The backdoor perspective represents the public administration as the doorkeeper releasing information drop by drop to citizens and public organisations.



The front door perspective represents the political discourse which assumes that citizens can take the control of information, can retrieve any data or document, consult files, ask questions and handle the same information as government officials. This means that government and citizens collaborate in control of information. According to the front door view, gatekeepers are just ICT interfaces, databases to enhance citizen information control and dominance. The black box in the middle of both doors represents the processing unit, where decision-making takes place. The box is not transparent as it limits information. Mostly, the criteria of decisions, the paths of choice and decision process remain hidden, i.e. political solutions are made without citizens' concerns.

**Figure 12.1: Two-door Perspective Approach**



Source: Rodrigo (2011)

The current world trends, however, show that ICT has completely revolutionised the meaning and practice of ODMP in government itself and all public institutions. The case of Wiki leaks reminds us that hiding information is no longer useful since ICT has introduced more ways of accessing information, even those kept as top secret. When information hidden by the government is released to the public, it can bring huge damage and a bad image. It is also an undeniable fact that the presence of the social media networks has made access to information easier and faster than ever before. Social media networks such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, MySpace and others have changed production, ownership, storage and distribution aspects. These networks have allowed people to have control of information at their fingertips. One good example is sharing of news about an accident within a few minutes because people have smart phones to take pictures and send to others. The information about any sudden event can spread to all regions in Tanzania and abroad within ten minutes. Due to the influence of ICT, therefore, all tasks related to production, distribution and storage of information should be shared with citizens, public experts and

academics, in order to generate more valuable information and to make better decisions and public policies to avoid disruptions. This is to say that, ICT is creating an environment that requires adoption and implementation of ODMP.

## **Literature Review**

Recently, openness has become a more fundamental instrument for transparency in all organisations throughout the world. However, openness as a concept itself may not achieve what is desired unless it is appreciated as a policy to guide different practices in the organisation. Scholars explain different ways that openness can be put into action as a policy in organisations. Blackburn and Rosen (1993) emphasise the change of corporate culture practices to accommodate values related to openness. Those values include: shared assumptions, employees' dedication to quality and customer service, team work, coaching leadership style and sense of trust among members. All these require transformation of organisational culture from traditional based practices of secrecy to a more transparent system of practices. Organisations need to change their practices in communication, recruitment and selection and career development, reward systems and recognition, performance review systems, job design and many more areas that are deemed necessary. In arguing for openness, Stasavage (2004) raises a concern of many scholars, activists and observers towards making organisations operate in a more transparent manner; for organisations all over the world to operate in transparent manner means calling for openness in deliberations, discussions and other organizational undertakings. Pfeffer (1995) writes about openness in organisations, though in an indirect way. His main argument is about proper utilisation of people's efforts to achieve competitive advantage by fundamentally changing thinking about the workforce, as well as employment relationship. The changes referred to here are the ones which are user friendly to people. Anything user friendly to the workforce in the organisation must be open. Generally, application of ODMP in organisations is facilitated by the desire to have more transparency in work places. The system can be applied in the organisation, among other things, to provide staff and the general public with a way to have their concerns answered quicker and more to their satisfaction. The policy also creates an opportunity to circumvent middle management and go directly to the top of the management hierarchy, i.e. to hear it from the horse's mouth whenever a decision to their dissatisfaction is made. Some people are, however,

sceptical of open door policies, arguing that it is good in theory but can create a slippery slope when put into practice.

Scholarly Personal Narrative (SPN) is said to be a relatively new approach to research. It was developed by Nash (2004) at the University of Vermont, focusing on constructivist research methodology that recognises the researcher's personal experience as a valid object of study. Cory and Uecker (2009) believe that story telling is the original knowledge management tool which allows people to tell about their experiences and listen to the experiences of others in constructing new knowledge. Further, storytelling is a valuable tool for revealing experts' knowledge, especially tacit knowledge, to entire organisations and allowing other members to build useful understandings from that knowledge. Some scholars have used this method in their research works. Unger (2014) used this method to share her own experiences on how relationships among people who do not know each other can be established. This is among the recent studies which borrowed this approach. Since some people are sceptical towards the authenticity of this approach of research, Nash & Bradley (2011) developed ten tentative guidelines for SPN. The guidelines, as enumerated below, require researchers who have opted for SPN to:

- Establish clear constructs, hooks, and questions.
- Move from the particular to the general and back again... often.
- Try to draw larger implications from personal stories.
- Draw from one's vast store of formal background knowledge.
- Always try to tell a good story.
- Show some passion.
- Tell the story in an open-ended way.
- Remember that writing is both a craft and an art.
- Use citations whenever appropriate.
- Love and respect eloquent (i.e. clear) language

## **Methods and Procedures**

In this study, my interest was to explain how open door management policy can be applied as an approach to governance and smooth running of HLIs. Two questions guided this study:

- i) How can ODMP be implemented in HLIs?
- ii) What are the challenges facing implementation of the ODMP in HLIs?

This study is based on SPN, a methodology developed by Nash (2004). It is a new kind of writing and research whereby someone is allowed to tell his or her own story in a scholarly way, to make a difference in the world. It is this paradigm that motivated me to write my own observations and experiences as an academic staff leader in HLIs. The main motive for this paper is to share experiences about better ways of running HLIs not only in Tanzania but also worldwide, through ODMP.

## **Results**

This part of the study deals with the actual application of ODMP in HLIs based on my own experiences and reflections of being an academic staff association leader for four years consecutively. ODMP can operate in several ways, depending on various factors. The factors that influenced its implementation at UDOM include leadership style, staff associations, use of ICT-based forums, composition and functioning of governance organs, management style, workers council, and trade unions.

### **Leadership style**

From my own experiences as an academic staff association and trade union leader, I encountered a mix of three leadership styles. Their contribution to ODMP as a system of good governance is described below. The leadership styles can be described as collegial, bureaucratic, and managerial. The collegial style was characterised by a strong passion for dialogue in making decisions, problem solving and peace-making. One of the major weaknesses of the collegial approach that I noticed is dominance of powerful, vocal and eloquent individuals in roundtable discussion. The less vocal and powerless were dragged to agree with decisions reached. However, the collegial leadership ensured that the rights and feelings of the less vocal were protected.

I also experienced the bureaucratic style. This was characterised by obedience and loyalty to rules, regulations and systematic documentation in the running of the institution. The main critique of this style of leadership is that it works better in stable organisations. It is averse to crisis situations and management by crises. To avoid this approach, the leader would remind people not to wait until crises happen and encouraged them to be proactive and foresee what will happen in the future. The managerial approach subscribes to Macgregor's theory X, which explains that people are naturally lazy and dislike working by their own volition unless obliged by external forces and incentives. At UDOM this was characterised by formal models of

governance, especially rational principles, which are about managerial processes in running the organization. The shortcoming of this approach to management is that too much reliance on administrative power to enforce compliance may not always function productively. There was a tendency for some people to resort to hypocrisy instead of performing duties innovatively. Despite their differences in personality, the respective adherents to the leadership styles tried to a great extent to implement open door management policy through participatory management. However, it is true that of the three styles, the collegial leadership style is more concerned with ODM than the rest. What actually happened at UDOM is that whenever the collegial style was shunned, the handling of controversial matters and restoration of peace and harmony through dialogue became very difficult.

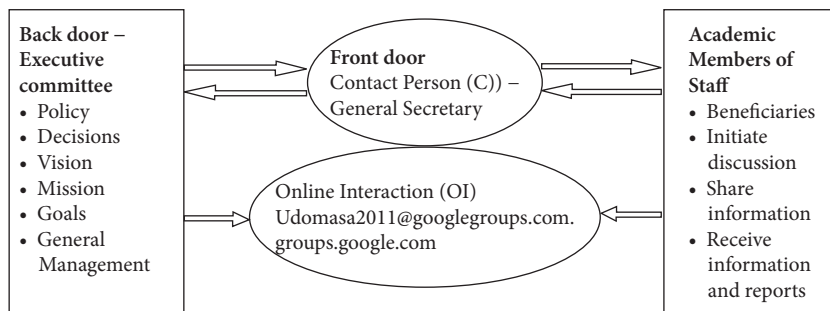
### **Staff associations**

The University of Dodoma Charter of 2007 allows staff associations to be established. So far, only academic staff have been able to establish their association known as University of Dodoma Academic Staff Association (UDOMASA). This association is vital towards the creation of ODM in two ways. The first one is the fact that UDOMASA is represented in almost all governance organs of the university. The representation enables members of staff to take part in decision and policy making pertaining to affairs of their own interests and the institution at large. Secondly, UDOMASA leaders are guaranteed more frequent chances of consultation by the university management both in formal and informal settings. My experience of being UDOMASA chairperson for four years shows that staff associations in any institution area are a vital vehicle to facilitate ODM.

### **Use of ICT based forums**

ODM can be practiced in day-to-day undertakings through ICT based forums. Though this kind of forum is less accepted by corporate actors, it was and still is user friendly to individual staff and their groups. Being a chairperson of UDOMASA, I established a system of communication for all academic members of staff. It was an Internet based system which enabled members to interact and share information online instead of queuing or walking from one office to another looking for services. At the beginning, UDOMASA did not have an office; hence, online Google mail group communication created served as an 'office'. Figure 12.2 below gives more explanation about the ideal of ODM.

**Figure 12.2: Conceptual Model for UDOMASA Open Door Policy Leadership**



Source: Author's own creation

From Figure 12.2, the back door represents the UDOMASA executive committee (EXCOM), which is responsible for general management and day-to-day affairs of the association. EXCOM performs all functions listed in the back door box. The front door contains two important things. The contact person (CP), usually the General Secretary, is responsible for registering members of academic staff to the UDOMASA Google mail group. He or she receives email addresses of the members and adds them to the list. The CP is also capable of deregistering any person from the group when the said person is no longer a member for any reason. Online interaction (OI) is the Internet based forum, which allows all registered members to meet and share experiences without face to face contact. Since the forum is interactive in nature, it was used to simplify a number of issues such as sharing reports from meetings with which UDOMASA is represented, sharing information about policies and laws of the institution, as well as supplying information about social, academic, national and international affairs. It also serves to give information about general meetings of the association, income and expenditure on an annual basis, and all other important information that is deemed fit for members to access. The last box consists of the members of the association as a general public. Through the Google mail group, members become active participants, as they are able to initiate topics, share experiences, access information and ask questions and provide answers. It is therefore clear that ICT has completely transformed the way ODMP is supposed to work. The black box, as shown in Figure 1, is no longer applicable with the presence of ICT. This is just one typical example of how ICT based forums can be used to apply ODMP, since all eligible members can access and share information conveniently.

## **Composition and functioning of governance organs**

This refers to the availability of governance organs with appropriate composition and meaningful involvement in decision-making. According to UDOM prospectus 2014/2015, the established participatory governance organs are the University Council, Senate, Human Resources Management Committee, Boards of Colleges, Boards of Schools and Directorates, Disciplinary committees for both staff and students and appeal committees for both staff and students. As I was privileged to be a member of the University Council, my own view through council meetings experiences, is that implementation of open door management policy should operate without any intimidation whatsoever, especially during meetings. Only then will ODMP be realised. Governance organs can be highly participatory, but without transparency they are as good as meaningless. One way of ensuring transparency is to make resolutions of the governance organs known to the public. The University Council is a good example since all resolutions were publicised on the website, to be viewed by all the people.

My personal experience from council meetings can provide light on how meetings can be implemented in a transparent and open manner to ensure ODMP. Among the values I learnt and consider fundamental for implementation of ODMP through governance organs are: punctuality, democracy, consistency, carefulness, systematic schedules, participatory leadership and fairness.

All these values are fundamental in implementing ODMP but can be implemented by strong personalities. It is, however, important to note that some people are cautious of the fact that strong personalities, if not objectively advised, may be misled to defend weak decisions and policies. So the best thing to be done by these strong personalities is to try as much as possible to get objective information to justify their decisions.

## **Management style**

Management style can be participatory, autocratic, dictatorial, transformative, democratic, transactional and laissez faire. All these management and leadership styles have a great role towards implementation of ODMP in HLIs. Participatory, transformative and democratic styles are likely to facilitate smooth implementation of ODMP compared to autocratic and dictatorial styles. The principle of collective responsibility can also help to facilitate implementation of ODMP since it shows there is trust among members of the organization.

Power distance, described by Hofstede (1985) as unequal distribution of power in the organisation, is a great barrier towards openness and transparency. The belief by most junior managers that those at the top have more unquestionable powers has always destroyed the real meaning of ODMP.

### **Workers' council**

This is the main legally established organ to deliberate policies and other decisions affecting workers in institutions. All workers are represented. Worker's council meetings should be conducted in a transparent and open approach to allow members to contribute meaningfully towards realisation of set goals. The challenge of the workers council is the reality that the head of the institution is the chairperson. It may look like a superior-subordinate meeting instead of a worker's council. Some heads of institutions may misuse their chairmanship or chairlady-ship powers to undermine views from the members who are subordinate to him or her.

### **Trade unions**

This is the manner in which the trade union with majority members is afforded power of bargaining agreement to represent workers in their wellbeing. Just like the role of staff associations in the institution, the presence of the trade union can also assist the smooth implementation of the ODMP in HLIs. A trade union, unlike staff associations, has a legal standing in the sense that it can be sued and sue. It therefore has broad scope to play its role. Currently, Tanzania Higher Learning Institutions Trade Union (THTU) is a trade union with a majority of members at the University of Dodoma. Its contribution towards ODMP is incredible.

## **Challenges Of Effecting Open Door Management Policy**

Implementation of the ODMP may not always be smooth. There are some challenges that may hinder its implementation. The challenges include lack of enthusiasm among managers, subordinates' fear of the unknown, vested interests, weak trade unions and staff associations, and attitudes of employees. Further explanation of these challenges follows below.

### **Lack of enthusiasm among managers**

As already stated earlier, the head of the institution is the entry point for open door management policy to take place. Some managers are more



reluctant towards ODMP implementation due to reasons best known to them. There are some who believe in confidentiality as the means of running organisations. The reluctance of these leaders impedes smooth implementation of ODMP. Many UDOM staff are of the view that this approach is gaining popularity compared to previous years. The university leadership has appreciated the ODMP's role in reducing unnecessary chaos. All decisions which were made collaboratively between management and staff were not only massively supported but also smoothly implemented. ODMP is something not to be ignored by all managers in running their institutions.

### **Subordinate's fear of the unknown**

Sometimes the concept of ODMP is perceived as a dangerous practice where a subordinate may expose himself or herself to the boss. This means that subordinates are not always willing to implement this approach, fearing negative consequences. In addition, some people consider ODMP as a blackmailing approach which intends to collect evidence of those critical and vocal individuals. The main argument here is that all those who tried to speak their critical views openly at the end of the day found themselves in trouble. All those who were perceived to have different views from those of management were punished either explicitly or implicitly. Some of the common punishments or negative consequences feared are demotion from administrative post, denial of or delayed promotion, denial of opportunities and other fringe benefits. The most dangerous fear is termination from employment. There are a good number of cases of intimidation and threats from bosses of various levels of management reported by staff at different points in time during meetings. One UDOMASA leader was once sternly warned just because he was trying to challenge the intentional violation of an employment and labour relations act about discipline of staff. It is therefore believed that ODMP as an approach to governance will likely work better if the boss is pleased, i.e., given only pleasant information by subordinates. Since ODMP is about transparency and openness, some bosses feel that employees are more empowered to question any issue they think is improperly handled. It is no wonder other employees fear ODMP due to negative consequences when the boss is not pleased.

### **Vested interests**

ODMP means making all necessary information concerning the wellbeing of the organisation known to the public. Any attempt

to implement ODMP is a big threat to all those who are used to the traditional confidential system. Confidentiality is good at cultivating corruption and all other evils related to it. It is therefore likely that, if it happens that those who are enjoying fruits of the confidentiality system are well established and networked, one should not expect ODMP to survive.

### **Weak trade unions and staff associations**

Trade unions and staff associations are regarded as watchdogs of the management and administration of organisations. In the event that trade unions and staff associations are weak, implementation of ODMP will be difficult to implement. Naturally, many people with powers would like to maintain their territories and comfort zones. In the absence of strong trade unions and staff associations, ODMP will take much longer to implement.

### **Attitude of employees**

Employees of the institutions may not be interested in ODMP. They may be more preoccupied with their own activities than those of the institutions. What matters to most of the staff is what they get for their survival and their families. They would not care about the management and administration systems of their institutions.

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

In whatever circumstances, ODMP as an approach to governance needs to be welcomed in HLIs. Two reasons can explain this; one is the assurance that organisations are currently populated by knowledgeable workers who are aware of almost everything going on. There is no way these organisations can be run by using the old system of thinking while expecting good results. Changes must be realised to cope with the contemporary demands of the knowledge economy. The second reason, which is equally important, is the huge improvements of ICT in all spheres of life. It means that, even if organisations as a whole are reluctant to adopt ODMP, they will be forced to do so. The only option available to HLIs is either to go for ODMP or subject themselves to danger zones.

## **Acknowledgement**

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## CHAPTER 13

# Students' Characteristics and Their Engagement in Blended E-learning Environments in a Tanzanian University

*Haruni Machumu and Chang Zhu*

### **Abstract**

Ever-evolving digital technologies have changed education practices in the modern era, and a great deal of time and resources have been ardently applied to develop, design, deploy and implement newly innovated educational technologies that enhance learning environments. In the modern age of globalisation, learning environments assume the role of time (instead of place) and process (instead of transfer of knowledge). Currently, the diversity of existent learning environments such as traditional learning and distance learning environments integrates information and communication technologies (ICTs) components. ICTs in education facilitate and enhance change in teachers' expertise, and students' learning and job career success after school. Experiences have shown that a blended e-learning environment (BeLE) is a mix of campus-based and e-learning environments that takes advantage of maximising the use of digital technologies and face-to-face learning strategies. This study examines university students' characteristics and their engagement in BeLE activities. A BeLE survey was used to acquire information from 440 Mzumbe University undergraduate

teacher education students. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis, and correlation analysis. The results indicate that students engage in BeLE activities based on varied physiognomies. Our results also reveal that all four BeLE activities that students engaged in were significantly positively statistically correlated to one another, with interactions, learning community and assessments, having the highest level of student engagement. The results offer valuable contributions to the understanding of students' characteristics and their engagement in diverse BeLE activities, therefore enhancing our knowledge of students' engagement in BeLE activities.

**Keywords:** *Blended e-learning, blended learning, blended e-learning activities, student engagement, student characteristics, higher education*

## Introduction

The idea to utilise BeLEs in teaching and learning is built on student-centred belief and active learning that allows a deep construction of knowledge, interactions and engagement in both digital and campus-based learning environments. It has been argued that in BeLE students have more preferences to engage in constructive, interactive and reflective learning activities (Back, et al., 2014; Keengwe & Kang, 2013; Khlaisang, 2015). However, many universities in Tanzania were built on the belief of traditional face-to-face learning, a system associated with the use of the physical presence of classrooms, textbooks, pen-and-paper examinations and talkie-chalk. Ever-evolving digital technologies have changed education practices in the modern era of globalisation and a great deal of time and resources have been employed to develop, design, deploy and implement newly innovated educational technologies enhancing learning environments (cf. e-books, e-library, e-exams, digital contents, and e-school). BeLEs have been described as novel teaching and learning environments, which are enhanced by the use of innovative resources of a technological, methodical and didactic nature with the goal of facilitating effectiveness of instruction delivery (Hung & Choub, 2013; Khlaisang, 2015; Prohorets & Plekhanova, 2015).

However, scholars have argued that the current deployment, use, and integration of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the education system in Tanzania support the adoption and implementation of BeLEs through a learning management system (Mtebe & Raphael, 2013). As a developing country, Tanzania has recognised the importance of technology in different policies and strategies that have been endorsed to influence its incorporation and

adoption in education. For example, Tanzania's vision 2025 and its national ICT policy of 2003 together prioritise and recognise the use of ICTs, the internet and e-learning (tools, services and management) to enhance education opportunities, and advocate for the development of e-education (URT, 2014). In the literature review, we note that although traditional face-to-face learning seems to dominate teaching and learning in most of the universities, the adoption of e-learning management systems and services in universities enhanced students' engagement in BeLE activities amid the demand to have the necessary competences to use technology based on the nature of the future of work (Demir & Sahin, 2013; Garrison and Vaughan, 2008; Keengwe & Kang, 2013).

In this regard, it could be argued that the expansion of ICT use in universities accelerated student engagement in BeLEs. This reflects the view of Reese (2015) that an improved learning environment takes advantage of blended e-learning with supportive technology-enhanced educational activities. However, an understanding of how students engaged in BeLE activities, and handled both campus-based and e-learning processes in combined forms, should be clearly established. A stance is taken by Prohorets and Plekhanova (2015) that learning environments, in practice, should be influenced by the design of learning activities that encourage students' engagement, participation and involvement.

## **Literature Review**

### **Blended e-learning environments (BeLEs)**

BeLEs are described as learning environments that mix more than one instructional delivery method designed to provide the most efficient and effective instruction experience (EL-Deghaidy & Nouby, 2008; Williams, 2003). Such combinations include any form of instructional technology (i.e. online recorded lecture, live online lecture, webinar, videotapes, films, web-based learning, televisions) mixed with face to face learning (lecture, tutorials, seminars, workshop) and teacher-led-training (Saunders, & Klemming, 2003; Wilkinson & Fung, 2013). In the Tanzanian context, BeLEs are mostly understood as computer supported and enhanced teaching and learning environments that combine both traditional face-to-face and digital technology environments with the goal of offering the most efficient and effective learning instructions.

## **Students' characteristics in BeLEs**

Among other factors that influence the success of e-learning in a developing country like Tanzania are students' characteristics, which should be closely considered. Based on learning environments in Tanzania, gauging student's ICT skills, ICT know-how, gender, age, number of courses taken, year of study, and their status, helps to know how they will engage with BeLEs activities and what assistance should be offered to them. We noted that most students are admitted in most of universities in Tanzania with some holistic ICT skills and limited know-how and skills related to teaching and learning. Some of the students hail from rural Tanzania where computers are installed in the head of school's office only. Their background characteristics are the focal point for the adoption, deployment and implementation of BeLEs for teaching and learning in universities. In this current study, we examine students' engagement on BeLEs based on the following characteristics: students' work status, place of residence, gender, and age.

## **University students' engagement in BeLE activities**

Students engage in BeLEs through performing diverse learning activities. According to Back et al. (2014), learning activities provide a link between individual learning and academic achievements. Although there are diverse learning activities and students engaged in BeLEs, the following have been examined because of their relative importance in the study:

### **Group work**

For a successful BeLE, group work is unavoidable because of its importance in promoting open learning and sharing innovative working ideas, as well as its fostering of joint problem-solving and construction of new knowledge. It has been argued that group work executed in BeLEs connotes shared workplaces and experiences that enable communication and coordination among students (Demir & Sahin, 2013; Tondeur et al., 2015). As stated by Reese (2015), skills, knowledge and behaviours developed in group work are highly needed as relevant skills for the student's working life after university. In group work, students engage in constructive learning activities, and negotiate and share ideas to achieve specific learning objectives.

## Interactions

Using their own computers, universities computer labs or other internet-based tools such as smartphones and tablets, students and teachers interact and share ideas and teaching e-contents. As Pilot et al. (2005) put it, communication and collaboration tools such as discussion forums (online and offline), chat, and email serve the purpose of facilitating interactions among students, peers and teachers. Studies have shown that student engagement with educational technologies and collaborative learning activities promotes teacher and student understanding (Aspden & Helm, 2004), and hence fosters the students' learning success (Zhu, 2014). In Tanzania, interactions based on BeLEs include live face-to-face lectures, seminars, offline and online group discussions, online postings, and discussion forums.

## Learning communities (online and offline)

Tondeur et al. (2015) hold the view that students' engagement in both online and offline learning communities enhances knowledge creation and promotes social cohesion among participants. It has been argued that a learning community promotes active participation and collaborative learning that builds up social cohesion among students and their teachers. This idea refers to Nel's and Wilkinson's (2006) findings that students' engagement in BeLE activities fosters a sense of community and knowledge ownership, and improves student achievement. In support of that, Hung and Choub (2014) argue that BeLEs emphasise the use of online learning communities rather than face-to-face learning communities because of their roles in connecting participants' learning activities in resource-rich and flexible learning environments. In this regard, developing successful learning communities valorises reliable, safe, secure and respectful design of BeLEs activities that deepen student understanding of instructional goals and accomplishment of learning objectives.

## Assessment

Assessment of BeLEs involves collection of information on appropriate students' practices associated with learning activities. Without the proper analysis of student learning activities and related information, it is difficult to evaluate not just their learning performance but also their engagement in BeLEs. Segers and Tillema (2011) expressed that assessments provide useful information about student learning performance, strengths and weakness. As suggested by Kyriazi (2015),



students' assessment in BeLEs needs to be more student-driven, flexible and time oriented. Studies have shown that assessment is a key learning activity for enhancing students' learning processes and predicting their achievements in BeLEs (Demirer & Sahin, 2013). In this view, assessment in BeLEs is characterised by feedback on time exposure, motivation and student active learning.

However, studies on student engagement in diverse learning activities in BeLEs have been designed to establish compelling evidence of the link between student-centred learning, self-directed learning and academic achievement (Keengwe & Kang, 2013). Although ICTs integration in education, eclectic use of e-learning, and learning management systems dominate the debates in most universities in Tanzania (Kafyulilo & Keengwe, 2013; Mtebe & Raphael, 2013), we do not know what learning activities students are engaged in when it comes to BeLEs in Tanzanian universities, based on their characteristics. There is very little literature that addresses university students' characteristics, learning activities and their engagement in BeLEs activities. Therefore, this current study examines university students' characteristics and their engagement in BeLEs activities. More specifically, the following research questions were addressed:

What are the differences in Tanzanian university student engagement in BeLEs activities according to student characteristics? To what extent are Tanzanian university students engaged in BeLEs activities?

What are the correlations between their specific engagement activities in BeLEs?

## **Methods**

### **Design, sampling procedure and context**

The study used quantitative survey research to examine undergraduate university students' characteristics and their engagement in BeLEs activities at Mzumbe University (MU) in Tanzania. Random sampling was employed to select courses from which sampled students were obtained. Two blended e-learning courses were randomly selected based on the highest number of hits, e-contents file download, page views and availability of course contents.

### **Participants and data collection procedures**

This study used cross sectional survey design to collect empirical data from 440 students who participated in this study. Participants were engaged in BeLEs courses and the following characteristics

were valorised: engaging in online interactions; online and offline assessments, posting, questioning and group work; live face-to-face lectures and online group discussions. Because application of BeLEs is still in its infancy in Tanzania, Mzumbe University was selected purposively for implementing blended e-learning courses. Virtual and physical observations were used as well to collect some data, such as photography, on students learning via e-learning platforms and face to face. We obtained research clearance approval at Mzumbe University and students were requested to sign a consent form, and we assured that only researchers would have access to the data that the survey provides.

### **Instruments and measurements**

A paper based questionnaire was developed based on two categories; one was student background characterised by the following variables: student status, place of residence, age and gender, and the other was the BeLEs questionnaire which was used to examine learning activities students engaged in, reflecting four diverse learning activities (interactions, learning communities, assessments, and group work). BeLEs consist of 18 items built on five scoring scales (1- strongly disagree, to 5- strongly agree). However, the overall reliability value of BeLEs items was .828, which is acceptable.

### **Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics were used to analyse students' characteristics and how this affected their engagement in BeLEs. Exploratory factor analysis and Cronbach's Alpha assisted in assessing the reliability and internal consistency coefficients of the scale and determined the number of reasonable factors and the adequacy of the sample. The correlation coefficient was used to examine the extent of students' engagement in BeLEs activities.

## **Results**

### **Exploratory factor analysis**

A series of exploratory factor analyses were run for BeLEs items to determine the variables' relationship, reliability, and validity. For 20 BeLEs items, a principal components analysis was run with a direct oblimin rotation and a fixed number of the factor being at four. The

KMO was .856, which is great (Field, 2009) and Bartlett's test of sphericity ( $\chi^2 (190) = 1894.32, p < .001$ ) was found indicating that correlations between items were sufficiently large for factor analysis.

### **Differences of Tanzanian university student engagements in BeLEs activities according to students' characteristics.**

The results of the current study indicate that 60.9% of respondents were female, and 31.1% were male. The results show that 34.1% were full-time workers, 9.1% part-time and 56.8% not working. Conversely, 300 (68.25%) were residing on-campus, while 140 (31.8%) were living off-campus. The results further show that 68.2% of respondents were of 20-29 age status; 18.2% were 30-39; 9.1% were 40-49; and 4.5% were 50-59. Table 13.1 presents the summary results of characteristics of the respondents.

**Table 13.1: Descriptive Statistics of Respondents' Characteristics and Their Engagement in BLEs Activities**

| Respondents characteristics | Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender                      | Male       | 172       | 39.1       |
|                             | Female     | 268       | 60.9       |
| Place of residence          | On-campus  | 300       | 68.2       |
|                             | Off-campus | 140       | 31.8       |
| Work status                 | Full time  | 150       | 34.1       |
|                             | Part time  | 40        | 9.1        |
|                             | None       | 250       | 56.8       |
| Age                         | 20-29      | 300       | 68.2       |
|                             | 30-39      | 80        | 18.2       |
|                             | 40-49      | 40        | 9.1        |
|                             | 50-59      | 20        | 4.5        |

Means and standard deviations for the BeLEs activities (group work, assessments, learning community and interactions) are presented in Table 2. However, the results show that group work scored the highest (Mean= 4.33, SD=.48), followed by learning community (Mean =4.26, SD =.49), assessments (Mean = 4.25, SD = .50) and interactions, which scored the lowest (Mean = 4.02, SD = .55).

**Table 13.2: Univariate Descriptive for the Four BeLE Activities Student Engaged**

| BLE activities     | Mean | Standard Deviation (SD) |
|--------------------|------|-------------------------|
| Group work         | 4.33 | .48                     |
| Learning community | 4.26 | .49                     |
| Assessments        | 4.25 | .50                     |
| Interactions       | 4.02 | .55                     |

**Tanzanian University Student Engagements in BeLEs Activities**

Correlation analysis was run to examine the degree of relationship and student specific engagement among the BeLE activities. The results indicate that all four BeLE activities that students engaged in were positively, statistically significantly correlated to one another ( $p<.01$ ).

The results further show that assessments and learning community scored the highest correlation ( $r_s=.539$ ), followed by assessments and group work ( $r_s=.503$ ), whilst the interactions and group work scored the lowest correlation ( $r_s=.338$ ). In summary, the results show that students were positively engaged in BeLE activities, with the highest level being in learning community, assessments, and interactions.

**Table 13.3: Correlations among Student Specific Engagement Activities in BeLEs (N=440)**

|                    | Interactions | Learning community | Assessments | Group work |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------|------------|
| Interactions       |              | .372**             | .351**      | .338**     |
| Learning community |              |                    | .539**      | .437**     |
| Assessments        |              |                    |             | .503**     |
| Mean               | 4.02         | 4.26               | 4.25        | 4.33       |
| S. Deviation       | .55          | .49                | .50         | .44        |

\*\*  $p<.01$

## **Discussion**

### **Differences of Tanzanian university student engagement in BeLE activities**

Based on the findings, the students' characteristics reveal that female university students were more likely to engage in BeLE activities compared to male students. This might be influenced by the large number of female students enrolled in both courses sampled for this study and then seeking to share ideas and experiences while learning via diverse BeLE activities. Although a good number of students were in off campus residences, very few students were employed on part-time basis, and that might be an influential factor for them to participate in BeLE activities. That is, although the majority of on-campus students were engaged in BeLE activities, a good number of off-campus students were engaged on BeLE activity. Our finding is consistent with the conception that both off-campus and on-campus students are likely to engage in BeLE activities (Chen, Lambert, & Guidry, 2010). The results further indicate that university students in the age range 20-29 were more likely to engage in BeLEs activities when compared to other age groups, which is possibly indicative of the fact that youths are more eager to learn new things that attract and motivate them to advance their academic success and employability.

### **University students' engagement in BeLEs activities**

The current study further indicates that, in BeLEs, students engaged in diverse learning activities which fulfilled their learning goals and objectives. Learning activity encompasses what students think, and what they do and how when working with academic activity in rich resourceful environments (Biggs, 1999; Wilkinson & Fung, 2002). This is true because there is a clear argument on how to describe the way students deal with their learning and their relationship with the learning environments (i.e. BeLEs). The results of the current study found positive significant relationships of the four BeLE activities. This is in support of the findings of EL-Deghaidy & Nouby (2008) that students who engage in blended e-learning support autonomous learning, manage their own learning and take responsibility for their learning.

The results indicate that students are highly engaged in learning communities, group work, and assessments, rather than interactions. This is true because, in BeLEs, student self-autonomy and freedom is encouraged and there is a network between several face-to-face

interactions with peers and teachers (Wilkinson & Fung, 2003), and those interactions exist with the support of ICTs. Similarly, the study revealed that assessment in a well-designed, locally developed innovated technology influences student performance and motivation to achieve wide education programme goals. This is in support of Kyriazi's (2015) findings that assessments in technology-rich environments enhance students' active learning, motivation to learn and achievements.

## **Implications, Limitations, and Conclusions**

This current study provides important theoretical, practical and policy implications and contributions to the understanding of students' characteristics as they engage in BeLEs. First, although students' characteristics have been studied in various educational settings, there is a gap as they engage in BeLEs. This research contributes to the understanding of students' characteristics and their engagement in BeLE activities; it identifies that there is a need to consider students' prior knowledge and skills in the use of ICTs for education for successfully determining their full engagement in BeLEs. Second, this research enhances our understanding of student characteristics in BeLEs, as well as how it is related to their engagement in learning activities. Third, the research findings can help us to improve educational practices, such as through the application of appropriated learning activities that influence students' engagement in BeLEs and BeLE design in the context of a developing country, based on their most influential characteristics.

This study also has its limitations. Firstly, although students were sampled from one university in Tanzania, a good number of universities and students could have been involved to have a more holistic view of students' characteristics. Secondly, there is a need to test students' prior knowledge on the use of ICTs for learning and their engagement in BeLE activities, because of the assumptions that BeLEs work well if student background characteristics are considered. Lastly, in further research, it is of interest to study the student and teacher characteristics, demand and motivational aspects of their engagement in BeLE activities.

In conclusion, there is a need to consider student characteristics when designing BeLE activities because their complete engagement, participation and involvement depends on their background and hence influences successful student learning. The study provides contributions to the understanding of student characteristics and their engagement in BeLE activities, and such understanding helps instructional designers,

teachers, students and policy makers planning and implementing teaching and learning practices.

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## CHAPTER 14

# Education Policy and Practice in Tanzania: A Critical Conversation

*Fulgence Swai S. Saronga*

### **Abstract**

This paper provides a brief historical description of education before independence and a critical overview of educational policy reform in Tanzania after independence. The paper reveals latent factors that continue to affect educational policy and implementation, some of which emanated from experiences before independence and others that are a function of our efforts to 'catch up' to the education systems of the developed world... affecting the efficacy of post-independence educational policies and planning to support equitable and effective educational practices in Tanzania. As such, the policies require a strong, comprehensive guiding framework that is the result of careful planning to enable implementation and full commitment for educational changes to occur, as educational policies, in general, describe a future state of the education system, making it congruent with current cultural and economic conditions. Indeed, culture is what we lost to educational colonialism and culture is what we hope to regain, even in the face of the demands of globalisation.

**Keywords:** *education, policy, government*

## Introduction

Policy reflects political reasoning which, like a metaphor, directs one to a perspective on a situation, with a particular view rather than another (Stone, 1998). Haddad (1995), with reference to educational planning, has defined policy as a representation designed to guide the implementation decisions. Valentini (2014) contends that as education policy is realised through the functioning of the education system, governance is the key factor in the creation of supportive conditions for quality learning and equitable education. Government in Tanzania, in which the education system is partially centralised and partially decentralised, remains the central factor in that system and in facilitating change towards quality and equitable education. Government determines funding models and sources and resource distribution to other levels of the education system which implement policy. As such, the key component in successful policy implementation is government and their beliefs and values about education (UNESCO Global Monitoring Report, 2009.) Public policy, as noted by Peters (1999: 4), is “the outcome of government activities, whether pursued directly or through agents”.

Some policies, when developed, may be perceived as incompatible with the current socio-cultural context. Indeed, educational policies are developed to guide the country in a direction towards a desired future state of education that is attainable. The policies set the goals, and work is directed towards the goals through an extensive and strategic planning process. This paper provides a brief critical overview of the history of educational policy in Tanzania, before and after independence. The 1995 Education and Training Policy (ETP) and current ETP (2014), as significant post-independence efforts to reform education, are included. The purpose of this brief paper is to identify the development of factors during the colonial period that remain ubiquitous features of the educational system. The argument is made that the education institutions, like all institutions, are “humanly devised to reduce uncertainty and transaction costs, they are rooted in culture and history and sometimes (the roots) are taken-for granted and become persistent norms and beliefs” (Branisa, et al., 2013). As such, the educational past continues to be represented in the current system and serves as a barrier to attainment of educational goals expressed in policy. This position has been taken in many scholarly publications (e.g., Mosha, 2000, Mushi, 2009, Wandela, 2014) but bears repeating, if only to keep this issue present in the thinking of educators, administrators, and government

officials. If these persistent issues could be addressed in a meaningful way, there may be hope for the successful implementation of policy to advance Tanzanian education for Tanzanian people and culture.

## **Education Policy in Action Before and During Colonial Rule**

Prior to colonisation, Tanzanian indigenous education was holistic in nature, focusing on body, mind, and spirit (Moshi, 2000; Sudarkasa, 1992). Without romanticising, it was characteristic of the culture of the clans in Tanzania and served the purpose of their culture. Education was the responsibility of elders and parents and prepared children for their role within their clan. Characteristics that are notable of that system reflected that there was a strong relationship in education between the learners and their environment, and that learning was 'hands on', participatory, and exploratory. Work for which women and men were educated was different, but regarded as equitable in contribution to the productivity of society (Wandela, 2014). Both genders were valued in their roles. This is a superficial description of indigenous Tanzanian educational culture and the reader is referred to Moshi (2000) for a comprehensive account and discussion.

As is widely known, the roots of the current Tanzanian education system and education policy are found in the colonial rule of Germany (1895-1918) and Britain (1919-1953), and vestiges of those systems continue to influence, although perhaps covertly, our education systems (Moshi, 2000). Just what influence this legacy may have, more than 70 years later, is a question this paper raises.

Germany, during its period of control in Tanzania, developed an educational system that included elementary, secondary and vocational schools with curricula, textbooks, and teaching materials meeting standards "unmatched anywhere in tropical Africa" (American Phelps-Stokes Commission, 1924). There was strong emphasis on productive skills and health improvement (Tanzania-Educational System Overview<sup>52</sup>), and at higher levels, clerical, industrial, and teacher training, as well as some academic courses. The language of instruction was Kiswahili, and German was offered as a foreign language. This educational system, remarkably, laid a foundation for the learning and writing of the national language. Yet, rather than liberating Tanzanians

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<sup>52</sup> Retrieved on 9/9/2016 from <http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/1516/Tanzania-EDUCATIONAL-SYSTEM-OVERVIEW.html>

through education in their own language, the intended purpose of the German education system in Tanzania was to produce a workforce to enable a German-style government, economic system, and society to function well in Tanzania (Wandela, 2014). One other prominent feature of German educational policy was the general exclusion of girls from education, which was significant in the increasingly devalued role of women in Tanzanian society. In essence, German-designed education had an unstated goal to educate the Tanzanian culture out of the Tanzanian student population. Missionaries sought a parallel goal to “westernise” Tanzanian Christians, alienating them from their own traditional cultural beliefs in their schools.

During World War I, education opportunities for Tanzanian children ceased but were re-established by the British when Tanzania became a Trust Territory. The British administration, like the German, provided subsidies to schools run by missionaries, and at the same time established its authority to exercise supervision and to establish guidelines to these schools. Doncaster (2006), in reference to the White Paper Memorandum of Education Policy in British Tropical Africa, Cmd. 2374, indicated that the apparent goal of education policy, as stated in 1920, was to enable the development of the Tanzanian people, as far as possible, and in accordance with Tanzanian values and customs. Future developments exposed this as a policy in writing only. There was a progressive expansion of the education system, and student participation in education increased tenfold along with a significant increase in expenditure for education. In a relatively short period of time, the English language replaced Kiswahili as the language of instruction in advanced education (Form I and higher), contrary to the stated goal of ‘education in accordance with Tanzanian values and customs’. To view it another way, the British followed the Macaulay doctrine (Brutt-Griffler, 2002) and trained children of the elite in English who then could provide a link between the rulers and the ruled (Bamgbose 2000). In colonial Tanzania, as elsewhere in Africa, the English language was linked to better pay and better pay was associated with higher status (Giri 2010). The average Tanzanian, as would be expected, desired both. Indirectly and through its connection to better employment and status, English was privileged over Kiswahili in the minds both of the British colonisers and the colonised Tanzanian populace (Mustafa 2005).

British policy did not explicitly exclude girls from education, but there was little incentive for girls to attend, given the social rules of the British that were applied in Tanzania. Gender inequality was reinforced

under the British system, as girls were educated for domestic tasks, which were not viewed as contributing to the economic status of the country. Structural and socio-cultural factors in education and in society, in general, reduced the probability that girls would attend school and persevere through the educational system (Rydström and Michael, 2008). There is a large body of research in economics that verifies that gender inequality and resulting lack of education comes with a cost not only to women, in terms of basic rights, but to society as a whole. Klasen (2002), Klasen and Lamanna (2009), and Branisa et al. (2013) provide substantial evidence that lower levels of education for women decreases their autonomy; increases fertility rates, poor health and child mortality; and decreases educational opportunities for the next generation. In sum, gender inequality in education equals a decrease in human capital and in social justice.

After 1931, with a change in governor, education access declined, education spending decreased and young educated Africans were deprived of early apprenticeships in any position with political responsibility (Church Missionary Society Archive, n.d), denying them access to the positions of power in the power hierarchy of the country. Primary school education became the main priority and attendance increased, supported by missionary schools (Church Missionary Society Archive, n.d). It is clear that the British regime, like the German, was interested in education for the workforce required by the regime and in accordance with British values and culture. This education system, with a structure and curriculum driven by non-Tanzanian values, created a place of unfamiliarity and challenge for its students. Nyamnjoh (2012: 138) captures the essence of the problem and its repercussions.

“Education in Africa has been ... a journey fuelled by an exogenously induced and internalized sense of inadequacy in Africans, and one endowed with the mission of devaluation or annihilation of African creativity, agency and value systems.”

In summary, colonial rule left Tanzania with three very powerful messages that were ingrained in the ethos of the country:

1. The Kiswahili language has little status or employment value.
2. Girls have a lower status in society and less employment value than boys.
3. A formal education system is designed to produce workers for a Eurocentric economy.

Each of these concepts (language suppression; gender inequality; and Eurocentric educational structures, practices and curriculum) served to diminish Tanzanian culture. Their long-lasting and significant effect on educational policies and processes are widely documented in the critical theory literature of post-colonialism (Wandela, 2014; Mushi, 2009; Woolman, 2001; Moshi, 2000) and have been identified as responsible for the destruction of the pre-colonial Tanzanian educational philosophy (Moshi, 2000).

It is the contention in this paper that these three widely held and broad cultural conceptions have weakened efforts for effective educational change in Tanzania. Despite extensive research and reports on this very issue, these colonizing conceptions have persisted, influencing policy reform, teacher education, access, facilities and materials, pedagogy, and curriculum. As Dei (2000) states, “if colonised educators fail to resist the continued marginalisation and negation of local people’s knowledge and experience, they also become accomplices to colonialism.”

In the next section, these three conceptions are found to continue to thrive in the education system after colonial independence and into the 1990s, despite efforts to the contrary.

## **Education after Independence (1962-1995)**

### **Education and language**

Ngugi wa Thiong’o (1996) contends that: “Language is not a mere string of words. It has a suggestive power well beyond the immediate and lexical meaning. Any language has a dual character. It has both a means of communication and a carrier of culture and history.” Chen (2013) reports that there is wide agreement that when an alternative language is used, individuals tend to shape and reshape their social identities and their relationship to the social world. More specifically, within education, Brock-Utne (2007) reported that English as a language of instruction in current Tanzania increases inequality, privileging those with families who are socially and economically well off. Extra instruction and access to materials in English is only one source of inequality. Her research comparing student discussion and understanding when taught in Kiswahili and in English is enlightening. Students, in general, when learning in Kiswahili were more engaged, talked more often and with fuller descriptions showing greater understanding of the lesson materials, and appeared much happier in the learning process. When learning in English, students were more passive and uninvolved, speaking very little.

Although the linguistics issues are too complex for a fuller description in this paper, these descriptions reveal the strength and range of the impact on culture of learning in an alternative language.

The Second Five-Year Development Plan (1969) after independence proposed that Kiswahili would replace English in secondary education and later in higher education, but this policy was never implemented. The lack of support for this significant change was compounded by the opportunities for teacher training. Primary school teachers were trained in Kiswahili, within the country, while secondary schools teachers had their initial training in English in Makerere College, Uganda or outside the country. The language requirement and the location of secondary teacher training were significant barriers to this opportunity for Tanzanians, and so there continued to be substantial reliance on expatriate staff. This reinforced the perceived superiority of English language in advanced education.

The 1982 Presidential Commission Report on Education noted students' lack of proficiency in both English and Kiswahili. The report documented as an example that a teacher will use English terminologies, provide explanations in Kiswahili, and give examinations in English, the language in which national examinations are conducted. Poor learning outcomes can be partially explained by this inconsistent language use. Teachers and students operated on a contrived dual language system and neither language is strengthened by this situation (Abdulaziz 1991). It was recommended that, by 1985, the medium of instruction be in Kiswahili at all school levels and extended to university education by 1992. None-the-less, the language recommendations made by expert Tanzanian educators were not favoured by the government and the ruling party (Ngonyani, 1997) and once again were not implemented.

Two factors are in play with regard to language and success, or lack thereof, in the Tanzanian educational system. The most obvious and more instrumental factor is the inconsistent language use in higher levels and the requirement for assessment in English. The second, and possibly more powerful factor, as it bears on self-worth and sense of belonging, is the impact of learning in a non-native language on the transmission of culture, as suggested by many scholars.

### **Gender equity in education**

This section intends to demonstrate, albeit, superficially, the continued influence of colonial thinking on the education of girls after independence. UNESCO (1962) reported that in Tanzanian primary

education there were significantly more boys than girls, and the ratio of boys to girls increased with increasing grade levels. Further, the report indicated a significantly inadequate number of schools to accommodate the school age population.

**Table 14.1: School Population and the Ratio of Boys and Girl after Independence**

| Grade          | Percentage of school aged children attending school | Ratio of boys to girls |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Std I - II     | 56 (age population 480,000)                         | 2.5:1                  |
| Std II - IV    | 43 (age population 460,000)                         | 3:1                    |
| Std V - VI     | 9 (age population 440,000)                          | 5:1                    |
| Std VII - VIII | 6 (age population 420,000)                          | 6:1                    |

The inequality in education for girls is multi-factorial and part of the legacy of colonisation. As Ricketts (2013: 5) asserts,

“The various social roles that have been viewed as appropriate for women in Tanzania ... initially by the colonial administrations, and then by the Tanzanian (government) have shaped the place of women within the education systems and have created two systems in which a postsecondary or even a secondary level diploma is viewed as largely irrelevant and unnecessary for the average young woman to possess.”

Although there has been advancement in the primary school system, in which over 90% attend due in part to the Education for All initiative, the percentage continues to be very low at the secondary levels, and the graduation rate of girls from that level is below 20% (Okkolin, et al., 2010). The factors leading to low engagement of girls and women in education, particularly in advanced education, are too numerous to elucidate in this paper (see Ricketts 2013 and Okkolin et al., 2010) but are wide ranging, including provision of facilities for self-care, early pregnancy, school fees, pedagogy and curriculum.

### **Education for socio-economic progress**

Shortly after independence, the new government reformed education with a view to producing a Tanzanian workforce to re-build the nation (Kassam, 1994), a logical reform direction given the context. In 1967, Julius Nyerere, with a continued commitment to nation rebuilding, introduced Education for Self-Reliance (ESR) that focused on students' learning, critical thinking and self-confidence. The intention was to break the long cycle of external control over the country, an intention



to rely on the citizens rather than foreign aid, and to de-colonise the thinking of the Tanzanian population through education (Nyerere, 1968). Nyerere was well aware, as a teacher and an economist, that the education system is a central factor in the conveyance of culture, as well as a mechanism for economic development (Nasongo and Musungu, 2009). As previously noted, the education system was developed to prepare students for a workforce that was under colonial rule, and its elements (teacher training, curriculum, assessment, etc.) strongly reflected the British system and its values. Nyerere's efforts in reforming education, as has been well documented, were directed at these elements and practices, which he viewed as disruptive to the re-establishment of Tanzanian culture. As Kassam (1995) notes, Nyerere identified formal education based on the British model as elitist, focused on individual economic status, not on productivity, and as a factor in shielding students from their indigenous culture. His policies produced some successes, particularly at the primary level, and others failed, mainly due to resource constraints and lack of support from international sources disapproving of the socialist direction in which Nyerere was leading the country. After 1985, when he stepped down from the presidency, there was a rapid growth in the establishment of private schools, driven by influence of the World Bank and the Tanzanian elite (Mushi, 2009), creating a two-tiered system. The private educational system was steeped in the structure, operations and traditions of the British model, and instruction was in English. The public education system, although under-resourced, turned away from the Nyerere doctrine and returned to, albeit in a more diminished form, the colonial model (Swai, 2002).

Just as the issue of language and inequality for girls has played a part in separating the learner from the culture of Tanzania, being educated in a system that has been transplanted from a foreign culture also enhances that separation. Obviously, these factors are not mutually exclusive. Educational instruction in English, and within a British structure, results in 'elite closure' (Scotton 1990), which is "the isolation of the elites with their preferred language (in the Tanzanian case, English), from the lower strata of the population and their indigenous language" (Kmwangamalu, 2013: 330), compounding social exclusion and stratification.

## **Educational Policy in Contemporary Tanzania**

At the time of the release of the 1995 Education and Training Policy, Swai (2000) reported that Tanzanian education was in decline. The

national feeling of strength and solidarity during the liberation struggle to decolonize the country had waned, and so too did the fervour to decolonize the education system. Education now required fees and created a significant burden for many in the Tanzanian population. The 1995 policy was identified as the first comprehensive educational policy to be developed in Tanzania (TIE, 2007) and was clearly influenced and pressured by the outcomes of the 1990 Joemtien World Conference on Education For All (EFA). Broad global guidelines, goals and targets for the expansion and improvement of basic education for all people: children, the youth and adults, without discrimination, were encouraged. The pressure to have EFA implemented in a timely fashion may have weakened the focus on social issues that needed to be addressed by education. Peters (1999) argues that before a government develops policy or makes any policy decisions, the current problems in the society that should affect policy development and implementation must be clearly identified and be included in the agenda for the policy-making system. It is doubtful that this type of action was considered in the 1995 ETP. Although there appeared to be inclusion of language and gender issues, and an acknowledgement of the socio-cultural processes in education policy, the 1995 ETP had over 115 policy action statements. Most related to decentralization, improved quality, expansion, science intensification, access, financing and enrolment, most of which were instrumental in nature. Of these 115 statements only 40% were implemented. As Carr- Hill and Ndalichako (2005) reported, the 1995 ETP (1995) was a strong influence on the framework and the policy foundation for the execution of the 2001 Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP). The PEDP focuses on enrolment expansion, quality improvement, capacity building and optimizing human, material, and financial resource allocation. Notably, there were several aspects of the ETP (1995) that did not appear in the PEDP, however. These include, among others:

- Access to education for disadvantaged social and cultural groups
- Special educational finance systems for girls and women
- Strengthening of achievement of girls in mathematics and science subjects
- Elimination of gender stereotyping.
- Enhancement of equity.

Kiswahili as the language of the lower levels of education, and English at the advanced levels, continues despite numerous and credible research

studies that identify the negative effect on learning and communication of the use of English, at more advanced levels (Carr Hill and Ndalichako, 2005). The colonial past still heavily influences school structure, pedagogy, and curriculum content but, by 2010 (TIE 2010), there was strong acknowledgement of the need to promote culture, customs, and traditions of the Tanzanian society, at least in policy. Paulo (2014) reports that there have been credible attempts in Tanzanian teacher education to shift pedagogy towards more active, participatory, and competence-focused teaching that is considered, in the contemporary education literature, to be superior to lecturing and passive learning. Interestingly, this type of pedagogy is consistent with traditional ways of teaching and learning in Tanzania. Unfortunately, the transfer of active and competence based teacher education into action in schools has found little success (Komba and Mwandangi, 2015).

None-the-less, enrolment rates increased substantially in both the primary and secondary system as a function of the 1995 ETP policy and the subsequent PEDP and Secondary Education Development Plan (SEDP) 2004 –2009. Unfortunately, educational quality as reflected in pass rates, declined rather dramatically, particularly in the secondary system. Vespoor (1989) suggests that this phenomenon of rapid enrolment growth and quality loss is indicative that the system has been extended in all sectors (managerial, professional, and financial) beyond the system's lowest level of effectiveness. This is very likely in Tanzania's education system and could well be compounded by the lack attention to current socio cultural problems in the PEDP that Peters (1999) suggested must be taken into account for effective policy development. Retention of students in an educational system requires the creation of a learning environment that is consistent with their culture and will engage and motivate them. In support of this position, sociocultural scholars Berkman and Glass (2000) have made a strong argument that individuals cannot be considered in isolation from their social and historical context. One could argue that the implication of the high dropout rate and low pass rate is that the educational system neither engaged nor motivated significant numbers of students.

In parallel to the rise in student enrolment, more teachers were trained for the education system. Unfortunately, and for many reasons, including very low pay, the education system failed to motivate and retain these teachers. It is not possible to ascertain whether significantly lower pass rates and increased drop-out rates of students and the failure to retain newly trained teachers are related, but the culture of the educational

system did not appear to engage either group adequately. Factors that should be acknowledged are the global pressure on Tanzania, as a developing country, to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, as noted by UNESCO (2000), and the influence of 'globalisation', which in itself is problematic. Mkandawire (2010) has cautioned, "... such words as civilisation, colonisation, development, adjustment and globalisation have often come along with marching orders." External pressures to achieve EFA-influenced educational priorities may have undermined efforts by Tanzanian educational specialists to respond to relevant cultural issues that have a significant impact on the efficacy of education. The evidence of quantity (students into the system) over quality (strong learning outcomes) is troubling. In the evaluation of the World Bank's support for EFA, the Independent Evaluation Group (Neilsen, 2006: xii) argued that:

"Countries need to resist the temptation to improve access first and improve learning outcomes later; expansion and quality improvement can have mutually reinforcing effects. However, competing pressures may make it difficult to undertake quality retrofitting at a later date."

The 2014 ETP's most notable and laudable feature is the extension of free education through the secondary level and is strongly supported by the new government that came into power shortly after the release of this current ETP. Although this central goal is significant, it further aggravates the tension between quantity and quality as suggested by IEG. How do the Tanzanian education leaders address this conundrum? It was argued previously that the three underlying conditions, legacies of colonisation, are persistent in our education system and still challenge the success of our students. Each of these conditions, which are contested issues in education and critical factors in Tanzanian culture, must become central forces in education policy, establish gender equality, require Kiswahili as the language of instruction throughout the education system, and advance pedagogy and curricula consistent with Tanzanian needs for national development. Could these three positions provide a cultural framework for policy development and implementation, and signal a strong focus on the primacy of Tanzanian culture in our educational system?

This may appear to be a simplistic question, given the complexity of the problem and the challenge of a solution. This is not an answer, but rather a question to consider. Culture is what we lost to educational colonialism and culture is what we hope to gain, even in the face of the demands of globalisation.

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## CHAPTER 15

# Community Participation in The Education Of Children In Tanzania

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### **Abstract**

Community participation in education of the children has been a current trend in many African countries, including Tanzania. The belief is that when parents and community members participate in the school development plans, many problems faced at school level are likely to be solved through a network of shared responsibilities between the school and the community around the school. This study intended to assess how the involvement of communities in school development plans could improve the teaching and learning environment in primary schools. The data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussion and documentary analysis. The study areas were Kinondoni, Dar es Salaam and Mbeya City Council, involving 108 participants, where 90 were the primary school classroom teachers, 10 head teachers, 6 school inspectors and 2 district educational officials. The findings indicated that school committees successfully controlled pupils' truancy and maintained the school discipline. The school committees, however, focused too much attention on the primary school leaving examination (PSLE). Teachers thought that the school committee needed to concentrate on issues that may contribute to better performance of pupils in their final exam, such as the provision

of desks and construction of classrooms. While some school committee members think they need to go to the classroom and check how pupils are learning, there are those who think that teachers are not supposed to be interfered with as professionals. I argue in this paper that if community participation in education is to be effective, the central government needs to play a leading role in safeguarding the rights of different groups in the society.

**Key words:** *Community, participation, education*

## Introduction

Community participation in school management and governance systems has been a key policy in education development programmes (Burde, 2004: 83). It follows under the current trend of decentralisation of service provision which has been opted for by many governments, with the main emphasis being placed on giving more power to local people (Suzuki 2002: 243). Participation implies “granting service recipients both a say and a stake in the services they receive” (Gershberg, 1999: 753). According to Rose (2003: 49), a community refers to “a network of shared interests and concerns, with communities categorised in a variety of ways, for example in relation to geographic areas (e.g. villages), ethnic and racial groups, religious groups, and school communities such as Parent–Teacher Associations”. However, a community may also have a diversity of interests, views and voices, which are facilitated as follows:

A formal alteration of governance structures, and a form of decentralisation that identifies the individual school as the primary unit of improvement and relies on the redistribution of decision-making authority through which improvements in schools might be stimulated and sustained.

Moreover, Rose (2003: 47) refers to two types of participation. The first is genuine participation, which implies that all members have the right and equal power when taking part in deciding on matters relating to school governance and assessing the outcomes reached by shared and joint decisions. The second type is pseudo-participation, in which decisions are made at the top level, and people or schools are mere recipients of what has already been decided, although they may be ‘consulted’.

Community participation in education may be based on a populist localist rationale. As an ideal type of decentralisation, populist localism implies that: “schools should be local, community-based institutions

run by local government in small population units. Teachers are the servants of the community and of the parents whose children they teach” (Lauglo, 1995: 14). It also implies that public officials, in this case teachers, as public servants, should be accountable to the local community they serve (Neave, 1987: 77; Lauglo, 1995: 13). In short, it implies that teachers should be accountable to parents and to leaders of the local community, who may also finance the education of the children through local taxes. As Neave (1987: 77) points out, it is on this ground that teachers may justify their service to society. Many communities demand a greater say regarding the performance of the schools and of the teachers, while governments are looking for new ways of devolving authority for teacher management to different lower levels of the country’s educational systems (Gaynor, 1998: 2).

Involvement of parents in the school-management process has been observed to influence the teachers’ attitudes towards their pupils (Lopate et al., 1970: 142). Burde (2004: 75) considers that: “Creating local parent–teacher associations, or parent support groups, is meant to increase the social glue that bonds neighbours (“bonding” social capital) and thus building community”. To Lopate et al. (1970: 141), making the school and parents interact in a dynamic way is the essence of a child’s educational development and achievement. It is claimed that participation will enhance local democracy and the accountability of the service providers, in this case, teachers (Suzuki, 2002: 244). However, as noted by Suzuki (2002: 247), parental representatives of the communities may sometimes act collectively, while in terms of school choice, individual parent interests may not be fully matched to collective decisions made by the community members.

Some communities also tend to be blamed for low participation in school activities, which signifies that communities vary in their appreciation of the value of education for their children (McGinn & Welsh, 1999: 41). Even if some communities value education, however, they may not have the capacity to get involved. Burde (2004: 77) cautions that community participation is for complementary purposes and should not replace the state’s contribution. Thus, as stated by Gershberg (1999: 768), parental/community participation in education does not mean a reduced central role; rather, it is a supplement to the government efforts. The report on localism in the UK, where much power is devolved to individual provinces and to more local government, states:

We are mindful of one of the findings of our predecessors' report into *The Balance of Power*: that many governments start out by trumpeting their intention to return power to the people, but most, over time, turn out to be considerably less localist than their early proclamations suggested (CLGC, 2011: 13).

In Africa, and Tanzania in particular, the resources at the local level and the capacity of the community to formulate and articulate locally shared preferences are often lacking. Community participation may perpetuate inequality if the government reduces its support on the assumption that the communities will make contributions (Rose, 2003, p. 50), because richer communities have more resources and will give more support to local public services than poor communities will (Leithwood, 2001: 228). Community participation is often thought to mean that the poor will provide the labour power for school-building constructions, which may not be the case due to the direct and indirect costs that the majority may not be able to afford (Rose, 2003: 50). An example from Bardhan and Mookherjee (2006: 325) is that if school 'A' has a large poor population of pupils, say 95 percent, and school 'B' has 50 percent of poor pupils, then school 'A' should receive a larger fraction of resources. Yet, the problem is how to draw a line between the poor and the rich. Maybe using some indicators such as parental occupational employment suffices, but sometimes these figures do not tell the truth, as a person in the informal sector may earn more than a person in the formal sector.

Gershberg (1999: 765) argues that while parents may think that they have a role in counterbalancing the school heads' power, some school heads may not necessarily be willing to share decisions. As a result, school heads and parents may concentrate on their respective vested power and may not cooperate to improve the schools. Gershberg (1999: 767) concludes:

"Parent and community participation can play a constructive, and even decisive, role in effective schooling, but it is not an end in and of itself and it cannot simply be legislated"

## **Community Participation in a Tanzanian Context**

Like in any other country in Africa, in Tanzania community participation in education has a long history. The government has attempted several times to ensure that people take part in decision-making on matters that affect their lives. The first attempt took place in 1962, when local authorities were introduced. Later the government

abolished it and opted for a more centralised system (Mmari, 2005: 5, 6; Therkildsen, 2000: 408). In 1972 again the government introduced the well-known 'Villagisation process' or Ujamaa vijijini (Norman & Massoi, 2010: 315; Buchert, 1994: 91). Another attempt took place in 1982, when Local Government Authorities (LGAs) were re-established for facilitation of democratic participation in decision-making at village, district and regional levels.

The Decentralisation by Devolution (D by D) was introduced during the late 1990s. The main purpose of this reform was to improve service delivery by enhancing the transparency and accountability of local authorities to the local people (Ngwilizi, 2002: 9). It also aimed at involving people in education delivery and other services, such as planning and developing the infrastructure through collaboration with private and civil societies (URT, 1995: xii). Primary school management was to be decentralised, involving the communities in matters pertaining to school-development plans (Mmari, 2005: 6). This reform was a response to failed service provision under the centralised bureaucratic and one-party system (Mmari, 2005: 5; Ngwilizi, 2002: 3). Other problems included the lack of transparency and accountability of public servants, which was a bottleneck in terms of effectiveness and efficiency in service provision. The President's Office for Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG) was responsible for the coordination of policy implementation, assurance and monitoring of standards.

There has also been a shift in social attitudes and interests in many communities, favouring the rights of parents to be involved and to participate in matters concerning the education of their children (Gaynor, 1998: 18). It is hoped that teachers may become more accountable to parents and, at the same time, more responsible regarding fulfilling the mission of educating the pupils. The district education officer (DEO) as an education leader has to ensure that schools operate in accordance with the rules and regulations set by the government. To increase transparency and accountability in financial matters, the amount of funds allocated for each school is to be publicly displayed (URT, 2001: 14).

School committees are to plan and decide on how those funds are to be used (URT, 2001: 11). The school committee is to monitor pupil attendance and the work of the teachers (URT, 2006: 31). Teachers are to participate in planning and decision-making on matters pertaining to the development of the school (URT, 2001: 17),

including prioritising what they feel to be the needs of their schools at a particular time. Moreover, the community has to provide the labour power for classroom construction and the central government has to contribute to the finishing (URT, 2001: 8). The practice is hoped to build a sense of ownership and commitment among teachers and the community concerning issues related to whole-school development plans (WSDPs). URT (2006: 31) outlines the key responsibilities of the school committees under Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP) policy as follows:

- Sensitising and involving all pupils, parents, teachers, the community in the school development plans;
- Overseeing the day-to-day functions of the school;
- Approval of the WSDPs and budgets;
- Effectively controlling the bank account operations and the funds received from the DEO for maximization of accountability and transparency;
- Ensuring the safe custody of the school properties;
- Preparation of financial progress reports and submission to the Local LGAs;
- Dissemination of information to the community through the publication of the decisions and school budget;
- Making follow-ups on pupils' attendance and ensuring compulsory enrolment of all the school-age children.

The key question is whether this process of community participation through the school committee can improve the teaching and learning environment in Tanzanian primary schools for enhanced teacher accountability to the parents whose children they teach.

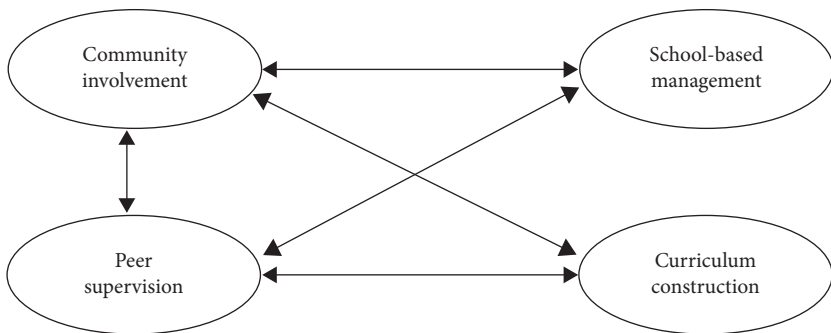
### **Determinant Factors for Improved Pupils' Achievement at School Level**

For a decentralised primary school-management system (in the name of community participation) to help improve the environment for teaching and learning and for better performance of pupils, there should be four mutually interacting and equally important areas (Figure 15.1). These include the involvement of the community in school-development plans, school-based management, peer supervision and teachers' involvement in curriculum issues.

### Community involvement in school-development plans

Community involvement is perceived as a process in which community members take part in implementing school-development plans, such as classroom construction; the provision of school infrastructures such as desks, water and electricity; mobilizing parents to send their children to school and ensuring a better teaching and learning environment in general. Schools are to be supported by communities in a collective way for the betterment of pupils' learning. Burde (2004: 74) states that community participation in the development has received prominence in policy making by making the voices and concerns of the beneficiaries heard, as opposed to supporting traditional top-down approaches. Community participation often aims at mobilizing people at the local level for efficient and effective resource utilization.

**Figure 15.1: Decentralised Primary School Management**



McGinn and Welsh (1999: 40) argue: “Time on tasks is a major determinant of learning”. Parental participation in education can be productive in several ways:

- Parents should take responsibility for pupils’ study time at home;
- The amount of time spent by parents with their children in doing their homework is more important for the learning outcomes than time spent by parents in school activities;
- Parents can support the schools with teaching and learning materials (McGinn and Welsh 1999: 41).

According to Rough and Basset (1998), as cited by McGinn and Welsh (1999: 40), parental and community support in matters that do not directly involve teaching and learning have shown some success in Bangladesh where parents are involved in the cleaning of the school

facilities, maintenance, security, the development of school schedules and ensuring pupil and teacher attendance. To McGinn and Welsh (1999: 41), “experts are [the] best qualified to organise the teaching and learning process”.

Burde (2004: 74) asserts that the community participation in education may play an important role in reducing costs to the state and improving schools and educational outcomes. It often manifests itself through shared decision-making processes between teachers and community members in school-management activities (Burde, 2004: 75). In this case, varying degrees of formal authority in making decisions concerning school missions, goals and priorities or policies, finances and materials, both human- and resource-based, may be transferred all the way to the school level (Gamage, 1993: 134).

According to the URT (2006: 5): “LGRP is geared towards strengthening the capacities of staff through well established structures of the local communities to enhance planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the delivery of quality pre-primary and primary education”. The assumed benefits of decentralisation are that it can help in developing the school and the community relationship, which, in turn, can help to generate a sense of ownership. This would also enhance teacher accountability for their teaching in matters such as covering the content, adhering to the school schedules and accurately identifying the educational requirements based on local contexts (Naidoo, 2003: 9). The URT (2006: 30) states:

The government’s goal of broadening democratic participation and accountability at school level demands increased involvement of the communities. Partnership between schools and communities will be developed in order to strengthen school management. At school level, the School Committee will be accountable to the Village/Mtaa and Councils respectively.

### **School-based management**

School-based management (SBM) is used interchangeably with school site management (SSM). As indicated by Clune and White (1988), cited by Nir (2002: 326), SBM simply refers “to the increase in authority at school sites”. The premise is that in SBM/SSM, pupils may be served better, as the schools using SBM will be more likely to deliver the educational programmes that are mandated from the central ministry when they can do so based on their own judgments about what needs to be prioritised (Hill & Bonan, 1991: 1). When SBM is used in this study,



it refers to the increased authority at the school level where the school committee members take full responsibility for all matters pertaining to school-development plans. The URT (2006: 4) states that the primary objective of the PEDP policy is:

To achieve increased enrolment, equitable access, quality improvement, expansion and optimum utilisation of facilities, and operational efficiency throughout the education system, through enhanced partnership in the delivery of education, and streamlining education management structures through the devolution of authority to LGAs, communities and schools.

There is also the assertion that increased authority for schools under SBM is likely to make the conduct of the educational process more effective (Nir, 2002: 326). SBM aims at improving performance and making service providers (teachers and principals) more independent and, therefore, more able to take responsibility for the results of their school operations (Hill & Bonan, 1991: 6). White (1992: 71) outlines five benefits that can be obtained when school-policy decision-making has been decentralised to the school level. First, it leads to an improvement in teacher morale in term of working harder; second, teachers are better informed about their practices; third, it leads to an improvement of the interaction across different schools and within the school setting; fourth, it leads to an improvement in the pupils' motivation towards learning and; fifth, it attracts new teachers and retains quality teachers in the teaching profession.

Leithwood and Menzies (1998: 341) suggest that professional control under SBM is likely to improve teaching and learning through better results, which is the main goal of teacher accountability. Findings from El Salvador, Mexico, Nepal and Pakistan have indicated that autonomous schools are likely to have better-motivated teachers with more regular school attendance (Gaynor, 1998: 62). If the decentralisation process is to be effective, there should be an emphasis on SBM, through which teachers acquire insights into their strengths and weaknesses (Wilcox, 2000: 77) and become well informed about possible solutions to the problems encountered in their teaching. Teachers also need to be creative and committed to their responsibilities and to be results-oriented with respect to pupils' academic achievement.

### **Peer supervision**

Peer supervision may include the use of Word Education Coordinators (WECs) and the head teachers as supervisors of teachers' work

performance at the school level. According to Chapman (2000: 303), in most of the developing world, teacher supervision is usually the responsibility of officials and school inspectors from district level. Chapman claims that this system of supervision from outside the school tends to remove the sense of supervisory responsibility from the administrators in the school (principals or head teachers). According to Chapman, head teachers are more aware of the pedagogical skills for the improvement of teaching than officials from the district, whose primary focus is on the enforcement of rules. De Grauwe (2007: 710) points out that in developing countries, supervisors from district or higher-level offices often lack the resources to do their jobs efficiently.

The EFA GMR (UNESCO, 2009: 158) states that poor and illiterate parents may lack the expertise and confidence to evaluate the approaches to teaching or curriculum design. According to Gaynor (1998: 62), teacher accountability is likely to increase if the responsibility for monitoring teacher performance is devolved to professional teacher bodies. Gaynor points out that the practice has been tried in the USA and has been introduced in Uganda and in many other countries. To McGinn and Welsh (1999: 41): “The logic of the Professional Expertise perspective on governance assumes that there is a small set of ‘best practices’ which, if implemented, will in all circumstances result in high levels of performance”. To Gaynor (1998: 62), Scotland provides an example where teacher monitoring under professional bodies appears to be an effective way for increased teacher professional accountability. In the Scottish case, training of the school heads in teacher supervision was crucial to ensure that more effective teaching and learning took place (Gaynor, 1998: 67). However, the head teacher might spend more time on the supervision of fellow teachers than on her/his own teaching (Wilcox, 2000: 78).

According to Stigler and Hiebert (1997: 67), “a focus on standards and accountability that ignores the processes of teaching and learning in classrooms will not provide the direction that teachers need in their quest to improve”. According to Hopkins (2007: 94), accountability should not only be to external stakeholders. He states: “To better support progress towards ‘every school a great school’ and to provide the diagnostics to support personalised learning, a more intelligent accountability framework needs to achieve a more even balance between external and internal accountability”. To achieve such a balance in Tanzanian primary schools, the WECs may be an important agent. Supervision helps the school leaders to track what has been delivered

to pupils. The school heads can provide internal supervision to monitor how teachers do their work. Teachers can also learn and assess one another regarding different teaching techniques for more improved learning by the pupils. According to Chapman (2000: 302), head teachers in Asian countries serve as an important bridge between the administration of education and the community, and actual teacher performance in classrooms. In a decentralised setting, head teachers have an important role to play in instructional supervision and in ensuring good relations between the school and the community. However, in too few areas do head teachers receive training to take up their responsibilities efficiently for improved instructional process (Chapman, 2000: 284).

### **Teachers participation in curriculum construction**

For improved pupil achievement, involvement of teachers in the process of curriculum change is very important. If teachers are involved in the curriculum changes it may justify whether their inputs into the curriculum may lead to a meaningful improvement in the delivery of educational services or not. As suggested by Nyerere (1967), the school curriculum should respond to the community needs and prepare individuals who can serve their society. To make this a reality, teachers need to be involved in curriculum-development issues, including curriculum construction and changes (Bennett, 2002; Hadler, 2010), since teachers are key to its implementation.

Involving teachers in curriculum construction integrates top-down and bottom-up educational-reform strategies (Kirk and MacDonald, 2001: 553). In most Australian states, for example, the production of new syllabuses and curricula involves teachers at all stages as members of advisory committees to syllabus writers and as key participants of the curriculum and syllabus materials when tried at the school level (Kirk & MacDonald, 2001: 552). The process is not only intended to make teachers committed to their own decisions, but also to create a sense of value and responsibility for their work, based on which their accountability can be measured.

### **Research Methodology**

This study adopted a qualitative approach using a case study design. It was carried out in Kinondoni Municipality in Dar es Salaam and in Mbeya City. Dar es Salaam was selected because of the availability of the policy documents. It is the richest city in the country and a regionally

important economic centre. Dar es Salaam is also the largest city in Tanzania, with slightly more than 4.3 million people as per the 2012 census (URT, 2013: 2).

Mbeya City was selected because PEDP, which is part of the decentralisation process, appears to have been successfully implemented there. For example, Mbeya City Council (MCC) ranked as the second best district in the country in terms of classroom construction after Masasi district in Mtwara region in 2005. It was my interest to examine whether school committees had contributed to this success. The data were collected through the questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussion and documentary review. The study had 108 informants, where 90 were the classroom teachers, 10 head teachers, 6 school committee members and 2 educational officials.

Schools were selected purposefully, with three schools in each district selected from urban areas and two schools in each district selected from peri-urban settings. The data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to obtain frequencies and percentages. Data from interview and focus group discussion were analysed using the voices of the informants to establish the pattern and thematic analysis.

## **Research Results**

### **Effects of community involvement in school management**

During the school visit in Kinondoni Dar es Salaam and Mbeya City, a large proportion of teachers (35% and 46%, respectively) did not see any effect, whether positive or negative, from the involvement of the community through the school committees (Table 1 & 2). Since the committees are set up based on official policy, it could also mean that teachers are either reluctant to reveal their disagreement and hostility, or that they are against being held accountable to committee members who are 'outsiders' in terms of the education service.

However, the actual responses were mixed. About a quarter of the teachers, mostly from schools 'B' and 'G' in peri-urban Kinondoni and school 'E' in urban Mbeya City, indicated that community involvement in school management has improved academic performance because of the cooperation between the teachers and parents (Table 15.1).

Other positive effects included communities' help in identifying parents who did not send their children to school, and increased classroom construction, which can help to improve the school environment. Problems that had not been sufficiently addressed by

the school committees included a failure to sensitise parents into cooperating with teachers and creating good relationships between the school and community members. Some community members do not respect teachers and used bad language, especially when pupils fail, which demoralizes the teachers and affects their commitment to teaching.

**Table 15.1: Teachers' Views on the Positive Effects on the Teaching and Learning Environment through Community Involvement in School Management**

| Positive effects                                             | School    |           |           |          |           |           |           |           |          |          | Fr         | %          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|------------|------------|
|                                                              | A         | B         | C         | D        | E         | F         | G         | H         | I        | J        |            |            |
| Identification of parents who do not send children to school | 2         |           |           |          | -         | 2         |           | 3         |          | 3        | 10         | 10         |
| Enhanced pupil performance                                   | 1         | 5         | 1         | 2        | 6         |           | 5         | 1         | 1        | 2        | 24         | 23         |
| Enhanced cooperation                                         | 2         |           |           |          | 1         | 1         |           | 2         | 1        |          | 7          | 7          |
| Improved school security                                     | 5         |           |           |          | 2         |           | 2         |           |          |          | 9          | 9          |
| Makes teachers work harder                                   |           | 1         |           |          |           | 1         |           | 2         |          |          | 4          | 4          |
| Improved pupil discipline                                    |           |           |           |          | 1         |           |           |           |          |          | 1          | 1          |
| Classroom construction                                       |           | 1         | 5         |          |           |           | 5         |           | 1        |          | 12         | 11         |
| Sub-total                                                    | 10        | 7         | 11        |          | 9         | 6         | 8         | 8         | 3        | 5        | 67         | 65         |
| No answer                                                    | 3         | 3         | 3         | 6        | 2         | 4         | 4         | 3         | 4        | 4        | 36         | 35         |
| <b>Grand total</b>                                           | <b>13</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>14</b> | <b>6</b> | <b>11</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>12</b> | <b>11</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>9</b> | <b>103</b> | <b>100</b> |

Source: Field data (2011) (Open-ended questions)

School committee members also have different views concerning the supervision of teachers' work performance. Some thought that they needed to check pupils' work in the classrooms to ensure that the pupils are being taught the different subjects and that they are receiving proper attention from the teachers.

However, more than one third of teachers disagreed that their work should be supervised by the school committee members (Table 3). Teachers thought, the school committees are not teachers by profession and therefore cannot be in a position to monitor and identify the

weaknesses of the teachers in the classroom. These responses came from almost half of the teachers in schools 'G' (peri-urban) and 'H' (urban) Kinondoni, and from school 'A' (peri-urban) and schools 'E', 'F' and 'I' (urban) in Mbeya City. Teachers had the view that involving the school committee members in monitoring their work performance in the classroom indicates a lack of trust in what the teacher is doing and degrades the status and standing of teaching. Teachers' worries were related to the creation of unnecessary hostility between teachers and parents, including the committee members. Teachers commented that the school committee members should deal with all activities that affect their work performance and their work in the classroom should not be touched.

**Table 15.2: Teachers' Views on the Negative Effects on Teaching Duties from Community Involvement in School Management**

| Negative effects                                        | School |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |   |   | Fr  | %   |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|---|-----|-----|
|                                                         | A      | B  | C  | D  | E  | F  | G  | H  | I | J |     |     |
| Hostility between teachers and the community            | 1      |    |    |    |    | 2  |    | 2  |   |   | 5   | 5   |
| No good relationship with the school                    |        |    | 1  | 1  | 2  | 3  | 1  |    | 1 |   | 9   | 8   |
| Bad language against teachers                           |        |    |    |    |    |    |    | 2  |   |   | 2   | 2   |
| Failure to sensitise parents to cooperate with teachers | 2      | 6  | 1  | 5  |    | 1  | 5  | 3  | 2 | 2 | 27  | 26  |
| Lack of respect for teachers                            | 2      | 3  |    |    |    | 1  | 2  | 1  | 1 |   | 10  | 9   |
| Disagreement on pupil punishment                        |        |    |    |    |    |    |    | 1  |   |   | 1   | 1   |
| Does not educate the community                          |        |    |    |    | 2  | 1  |    |    |   |   | 3   | 3   |
| Sub-total                                               | 5      | 9  | 2  | 6  | 4  | 8  | 8  | 9  | 4 | 2 | 57  | 54  |
| No answer                                               | 5      | 3  | 8  | 4  | 6  | 4  | 3  | 3  | 5 | 7 | 48  | 46  |
| Grand total                                             | 10     | 12 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 12 | 11 | 12 | 9 | 9 | 105 | 100 |

Source: Field data (2011) (Open-ended questions)

**Table 15.3: Teachers' Views on School Committee Supervision of their Work Performance**

| Teacher Views                                                       | School    |           |           |          |           |           |           |           |          |          | Fr        | %          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|------------|
|                                                                     | A         | B         | C         | D        | E         | F         | G         | H         | I        | J        |           |            |
| Not teachers by profession                                          | 5         | 1         | 4         |          | 5         | 8         | 5         | 6         | 3        | 1        | 38        | 38         |
| Helps school improvement if it works within its limits of authority |           |           | 1         | 1        | 3         | 2         | 1         | 4         |          |          | 12        | 12         |
| Degrading for teachers                                              |           | 1         |           | 1        | 3         |           |           | 1         |          |          | 5         | 5          |
| Helps solve school problems                                         | 1         |           |           |          | 1         |           | 1         |           |          |          | 3         | 3          |
| School inspection is sufficient                                     |           |           | 1         |          | 1         |           |           |           |          |          | 2         | 2          |
| Needs to know my work performance                                   |           | 1         | 1         |          |           | 1         |           |           | 2        |          | 5         | 5          |
| Helps improve academic performance                                  | 1         |           |           |          |           |           | 1         |           |          | 3        | 5         | 5          |
| Does not follow- up on academic matters                             |           |           | 1         |          |           |           |           |           |          | 2        | 3         | 3          |
| Gives me an opportunity to learn                                    |           |           |           |          |           |           |           |           |          |          | 1         | 1          |
| Sub-total                                                           | 7         | 3         | 8         | 2        | 13        | 11        | 8         | 11        | 5        | 6        | 74        | 75         |
| No answer                                                           | 3         | 7         | 2         | 4        | -         | 3         | 2         | -         | 1        | 3        | 25        | 25         |
| <b>Grand total</b>                                                  | <b>10</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>6</b> | <b>13</b> | <b>14</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>11</b> | <b>6</b> | <b>9</b> | <b>99</b> | <b>100</b> |

Source: Field data (2011) (Open-ended questions)

Teachers preferred to be supervised by the school inspectors, head teachers and the WECs, as these are within the teaching profession. To teachers, as school committee members are not from the teaching profession, it becomes difficult for them to identify the weaknesses of teachers.

There were some school committees members, however, who had different views about their role in supervising the teachers. They thought their role was not to interfere in what the teacher is doing in the classroom, as they are not teachers by profession. What they thought could be more important for them to do is to make sure that they help

the schools improve the teaching and learning environment by helping the teachers to identify the problems that impede effective teaching and learning, such as the construction of classrooms and provision of desks.

## **Discussion of the Findings**

The findings indicate that the school committee concentrated exclusively on standard-VII leaving-examination results. A focus on the final examination is not necessarily bad but the school committees should ensure that schools improve from standards I–VII. The main responsibility of the school committee members should be to mobilise the resources from the community and parents. This could help improve the teaching and learning environment in primary schools, which is essential for the good performance of pupils in their final grade.

While checking on truancy and discipline among the pupils is important, this may not suffice to reduce absenteeism and negative behaviour, and reduced truancy may not suffice to improve academic performance. Academic performance will depend on a wider range of factors, including the commitment of teachers to teach and pupil willingness and capacity to learn.

Moreover, the idea that the community should provide their labour power for classroom construction and that the government should provide the finishing creates problems, as stated by Rose (2003). This type of decentralised responsibility may increase the social inequality of the children whose parents are not strongly motivated in terms of their children's schooling, as well as the social inequality of orphans. School 'H' in urban Kinondoni, for example, did not even have a staffroom for teachers, and pupils were accommodated in only a few classrooms and, hence, in congested classes. This made the work of the teacher difficult. School 'B' in peri-urban Kinondoni had few classrooms, but construction was in process under the control of the school committee and community members. This indicates that in the near future, the problem of a shortage of classrooms in that school may be solved. Thus, as Bardhan and Mookherjee (2006) state, in locations where the majority of the population are poor, the government needs to provide more support than it does for the rich.

These findings support the rationale for involving the community in school-development plans, although this has mainly been in terms of providing labour. It also shows that community involvement in decentralised school management does play an important role in some locations. The policy statement stipulates that the school committee needs



to oversee the functions of the schools. It has not been clear and there are no guidelines for the intended ‘oversight’ by the school committee within the decentralised primary school-management plan. General policy statements may, therefore, impede proper implementation of the plan because there will be diverse local interpretations and perceptions. Teachers may end up frustrated, as they have to be answerable to multiple groups, which also affects the chain of command of authority. Moreover, the statement that the school committee is responsible for monitoring teaching in the classroom is not clear regarding what kinds of monitoring should be carried out. Teachers thought that granting authority to people who are outside of their profession disgraces their teaching field. According to teachers, school committees should be involved in all activities outside the classroom to facilitate the work performance of teachers for improved pupils’ performance. Pedagogical professionalism implies that teachers need to be accorded considerable autonomy of their duties (Lauglo, 1995:16). According to Lauglo, teachers’ performance needs to be regulated by people who are within the profession. Kogan (1978), as cited by Ranson (2003: 203), holds that “only the trained eye could judge the quality of teaching and [...] pupil progress”. The decentralisation of teacher-management functions by devolving responsibilities to people within the same profession, it is argued, will enhance teachers’ professionalism and accountability to colleagues and the pupils they teach (Gaynor, 1998: 61).

## **Conclusion**

As education is becoming central to many governments in this postmodern era, community participation seems to be a way forward for achieving quality education in the country. The Tanzanian government has adapted community participation policies where the school committee members as representatives of the parents and/or community have been vested with the responsibility to oversee the functions of the schools in a decentralised plan. Thus, community participation will remain a main strategy and inevitable for any meaningful outcomes from decentralised policies.

In order to have an improved teaching and learning environment in primary schools, school committee members, in collaboration with teachers, need to take full responsibility for their own school-development plans and be supported with resources to implement them based on their school localities and priorities. For school committee members to be effective in carrying out their responsibilities in a

decentralised, autonomous setting, they need training. At the same time, as Rose and Gershberg state, the central government has an important role to play in safeguarding the rights of different groups under a decentralised system. The government also needs to clearly stipulate what functions the school committee is supposed to have and what should be left to the teachers themselves.

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## CHAPTER 16

# The Sustainability of Literacy Enhancement Projects in Tanzania in an Era of Globalisation

*Anyanzo John Philip*

### **Abstract**

This paper reports on the review of selected literacy projects in Tanzania funded through the support of corporate multilateral agencies. The world conferences on Education for All, which resulted in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), challenged African governments to focus on access, equity, and quality education for all. Consequently, many African governments over the last decade invested hugely in education, resulting in many more children accessing basic education than ever before. In Tanzania, the 1995 and 2014 Education and Training policies, with emphasis on quality education and the introduction of fee-free basic education provision, are consistent with the global agenda in the form of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, despite the numerical and infrastructural achievements in education in Tanzania, several study reports have continued to show low learning outcomes, especially in basic literacy and numeracy among Tanzanian children. Therefore, given the limitations of the government in delivering quality education and providing sustainable solutions to literacy challenges in Tanzania,

this paper implores that the corporate multilateral agencies play a crucial role in offering solutions to the literacy achievement crisis by either direct funding of the projects or mobilizing others to navigate different types of literacy innovation projects. Findings from the review indicate that reading instruction, culture and learning outcomes of primary school children have improved as a result of the literacy projects. However, sustainability of the projects stood out as a key challenge to be addressed in order to sustain the results of the interventions. Besides policy gaps, ideological differences of multilateral agencies frustrate efforts to sustain literacy interventions, however. This paper recommends that the Ministry of Education and Training should streamline and coordinate any literacy projects funded by multilateral agencies, scale up the innovations, and with time integrate literacy innovations into the national curriculum, plans and budgets for sustained results, and replication of best practices.

**Key words:** *Corporate Multilateral Agencies, literacy, sustainability, policies, Millennium Development Goals, Sustainable Development Goals*

## **The Role of Corporate Multilateral Agencies in Education: A Case of Literacy Projects in Tanzania**

### **Introduction**

The international community has supported an unprecedented increase and access to basic education over the last decade. The world conferences on education in 1999 and 2000 resulted in the Education for All (EFA) and United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Mundy et al, 2016). The MDGs are a set of time-bound, measurable goals that target, among other thematic areas, illiteracy by 2015. Goal two of the MDGs challenged African governments to ensure that by 2015, all children have access to, and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality. The MDGs have been replaced by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 which took effect in January, 2016. Goal number four (4) of the SDGs 2030 aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all.” Therefore, the huge investments by the past and present Tanzanian governments in education have been a response to the demands of providing education for all. The introduction of fee-free basic education early this year, and the Education and Training policies (ETP) of 1995 and 2014 respectively, are consistent with the global agenda. In addition, government increased funding for school

infrastructural developments and teacher education in a bid to address the quality of education. This has enabled government to meet its targets, and international demand for increased access and equity in formal basic education.

However, despite the increased access to basic education, infrastructural developments and improved education policies, high-quality education remains elusive for many. Study reports continue to indicate persistent low learning outcomes of the learner cohorts enrolled. According to the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) (2015), 40% of second graders could not read a word in Kiswahili, while three out of ten in standard three could read a standard two text (UWEZO, 2015). Thus, this state of affairs stimulates a fresh concern in an era of globalisation because quality education is a prerequisite of, and foundation for, individual and societal socio-economic development. This paper posits that learning outcomes increase with increased competences in literacy and numeracy. Literacy development, therefore, becomes a crucial tool for acquiring a wide range of learning skills and acts as an inducement for everyday life and life-long learning. Besides, literacy is one of the pillars that support individual and societal development, as well as play a key role in poverty reduction. Ngwaru and Oluga (2015) assert that there is no ground to dispute the close correlation existing between poverty and illiteracy. The rate of literacy is conversely proportional to the rate of poverty; that is, the lower the literacy rates, the higher the poverty rates and vice-versa. This suggests that a literate population is productive and can support social, economic and political development of a developing country like Tanzania in an era of globalisation.

In this paper, literacy is viewed in the broadest context and described as the ability to recognise, comprehend, infer, create, compute, and communicate using visual, audible and digital materials across disciplines, socio-cultural and other contexts (Otto, 2008; International Literacy Association, 2016). The purpose of this paper is to present the contributions made by corporate multilateral agencies over the last decade in literacy enhancement in Tanzania. This paper describes multilateral agencies as international organisations or institutions with three or more government memberships which conduct all or a significant part of their activities together in favour of development, in aid-recipient countries. These corporate multilateral agencies include but are not limited to:

- United Nations agencies such as UNESCO, United Nations International Children Education Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme, and United Nations High Commission for Refugees
- Financial institutions such as the World Bank, African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, and International Monetary Fund
- European Union institutions such as Irish Aid, Netherlands Royal Embassy, Belgium Technical Corporation, and the European Development Fund
- Development agencies such as Aga Khan Development Network, Global Affairs Canada, and United States Agency for International Development
- Non-governmental organisations such as World Vision, Save the Children, Compassion International, and Plan International
- Business firms such as Coca Cola, Vodacom, Airtel, and MTN
- Regional bodies

## **Purpose of the Study**

This paper is premised on the belief that further commitment of multilateral agencies and government of Tanzania to consolidate and sustain existing literacy innovations could be invoked. In addition, the multilateral agencies can play a pivotal role in funding the literacy projects. In this way, the current literacy achievements crisis can be addressed by offering more opportunities and strategies for sustainable improvement of learning outcomes of Tanzanian children.

The purpose of the review was to explore the extent to which literacy projects implemented through the support of corporate multilateral agencies have changed the fortunes of learning outcomes in Tanzanian schools. This was intended to recognise the efforts of multilateral agencies in supplementing government efforts to achieve an educational agenda in an era of globalisation. Additionally, the paper sought to stimulate both local and global efforts in strengthening and sustaining literacy enhancement projects.

## **Research Questions**

The study sought to answer the following questions:

- i) How are literacy projects initiated by corporate multilateral agencies contributing to literacy enhancement in Tanzania in an era of globalisation?

- ii) What are the challenges facing the sustainability of donor funded literacy projects in Tanzania?
- iii) What are the strategies that have been put in place by the corporate multilateral agencies and government of Tanzania to sustain the literacy projects?

## **Methodology**

### **Overall design**

The overall design for this review was an intrinsic case study. According to Pine (2009), an intrinsic case study describes a specific situation and understands the inner workings to afford a holistic entity description.

A case study can be a person, organisation or phenomena. However, the focus of this review was on the organisations (multilateral agencies) supporting or funding literacy projects (phenomena). Based on my background as a language educator, project officer of a donor funded literacy project, and specialist in language and literacy, I adopted an intrinsic case study design to enable me to illuminate meaning through in-depth analysis of literacy projects implemented through the support of multilateral agencies. Although a basic characteristic of case study is that of using a number of different data sources (Yin, 2003), the review focused more on document analysis, field experiences, and unstructured interviews with two education partners.

### **Selection of the literacy projects for review**

The projects' documents for review were selected purposively on the basis of their focus on literacy enhancement either by direct provision of reading materials or space for primary school children, or indirectly through enhancing the competences of teachers in literacy instruction. The second criterion used was to select literacy projects that targeted primary school children. Although some of the libraries were established for all levels of learners, data was limited to primary school children. Again, sustainability strategies of the literacy interventions were critically examined to ascertain the impact of the projects.

### **Analysis**

The findings of this paper emerged from secondary data which involved an extensive review and triangulated evaluation reports, project reports, and project books reviewed. I analysed in detail the nature, purpose, achievements, and challenges of selected literacy projects. According to Dowling et al. (2010), documents are rich sources of data. I then



compiled and described experiences that can be drawn, and lessons that can be learnt from the literacy projects, and finally wrote memos on the main findings. The main purpose was to share the findings to inform policy and practice in Tanzania in the era of globalisation. The themes were created by identifying common issues that emerged from the projects, and those that needed stakeholder attention and intervention in order to sustain the projects' positive outcomes.

## **Review and Analysis of the Selected Literacy Projects**

### **Readership promotion experiences in Tanzania:**

#### **The TusomeVitabu Project**

The TusomeVitabu Project was funded by the Netherlands Royal Embassy, and implemented by Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE) International, Tanzania between 1999 and 2006. The project was implemented in 16 districts covering the regions of Arusha, Kagera and Mwanza (Okwach & Sifuna, 2007). The purpose of the project was to promote reading habits among primary pupils by providing reading materials and increasing access to reading materials, and creating a conducive reading environment for sustainability.

Overall, the project led to participation of pupils in their learning, community engagement in management, formation of clubs, establishment of 676 functional libraries, 680 library sub-committees, and training of about 1120 teachers. As a result, the teaching and learning process was promoted, leading to improved academic performance of primary children. However, the project had challenges of readership time, economic capacity of community members to organise reading days and competitions, documentation, and monitoring (Onukaogu et al, 2005).

#### **The Lakeside literacy in Tanzania: The Katoke School Improvement Project**

The project was implemented in 2003, and based at a Teachers' College south of Bukoba in the Kagera Region. The project was a link between University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia, and Katoke Teachers' College in partnership with UNICEF. The project aimed to strengthen quality of teaching and learning in 20 surrounding primary schools and to improve the poor quality of education. More so, the project was aimed at supporting the Tanzanian Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 1995. Therefore, its emphasis on quality education

was consistent with the 2002 Primary Education Development Plan (Babygeya, 2002).

Through its six strands of leadership strengthening, community involvement, peer supervision, scholarship, resources, and teaching, the project improved quality of education in the beneficiary schools.

### **Reading for All: Movement to mainstream active learning approaches in Tanzania**

The project aimed at changing the face of reading instruction in order to promote literacy skills in Tanzania. This was a partnership between the Ministry of Education and Culture, UNESCO, and International Reading Association. The project was organised under UNICEF-UNESCO and the Tanzania government to build capacity of professional teachers in subject areas. For example, there was in-service training on reading, writing and arithmetic (3Rs). In 1981, through support from the Swedish government, the methodology was institutionalised in Korogwe Teachers' Training College and schools.

### **Children's Book Project, Tanzania**

The Children's Book Project (CBP) was founded in 1991 as a readership intervention programme to develop literacy skills amongst school children and youth. The project operated in 13 districts of coastal and rural districts close to Dar es Salaam. The project encouraged a reading culture among children by increasing access to quality books for teachers, pupils and youth. Additionally, the project enhanced teacher pedagogical competences to improve quality reading and writing instruction.

An internal evaluation report showed that literacy development was strengthened through provision of socio-culturally sensitive and grade level reading books. More so, there was increased student and teacher achievement (Misty et al, 2009).

### **Room to Read**

Room to read (RtR) operates in nine countries in Asia and Africa. In Tanzania, activities, along with programme implementation, began in 2012. Consistent with its model of holistic intervention, RtR launched school library, teacher empowerment, school construction and Girls' Education (GE) programmes in partnership with local government, Aga Khan University-Institute for Educational Development, East Africa and individual communities. As a result, 51 libraries were established,

31 book titles published, 48 school construction projects completed and 888 GE participants were empowered to remain in school. This increased the retention of girls in school as a result of life skill training. Again, improved teaching methodology of teachers has been enhanced through on-going support (annual report, 2014).

Furthermore, responding to the demands of the Millennium Summit held in New York 2000, RtR, through its theory of change, deliberately focused on literacy development. Consequently, there was increased access to culturally relevant, age-appropriate and gender-sensitive reading materials. Children have become independent readers, thus empowering them for life-long learning. RtR has been able to achieve this by increasing the effectiveness of teachers and facilitators to teach literacy skills and develop the habit of reading among children.

Additionally, RtR improved the infrastructures of schools and addressed the need for better learning environments with adequate space-creation of a literate environment at school and home. A study by Ngwaru and Oluga (2015) indicated that school infrastructures are important to sustainable access to schooling and educational outcomes. Therefore, adequate infrastructures with adequate, relevant, creative, socio-culturally sensitive and interesting print materials encourage and foster a culture of reading. According to the annual report of 2014, children have become independent readers as a result of the inculcation of a reading culture through the provision of the reading materials.

## **Findings and Discussion**

In this sub-section, I present and discuss the findings of the review under various themes.

### **Promotion of reading culture and literacy development**

Findings from the review indicate that the literacy projects have exposed primary school children to a variety of reading materials, especially books. For example, the libraries established under the RtR programme and the TusomeVitabu project offered more opportunities for readership, and hence inculcated the culture of reading for both pleasure and information among children. The evaluation report on the Vitabu project (2007) and annual report on RtR (2014) revealed improvement in literacy development and learning outcomes. More so, the libraries successfully connected oral and written culture, and thereby stimulated an interest in reading among children. The evaluation report of the Vitabu project further indicated a change in the literacy practices

of at least some of the children in the local community. These findings are therefore consistent with the ideological view of literacy that describes literacy as always context bound, situated in culture and time/space (Kozulin, 1998). Additionally, Street (2001) affirms this finding and argues that, if literacy projects and programmes are to be effective in diverse regions of the world, researchers need to understand the uses and meanings of literacy practices to local people themselves.

However, sustainability plans were constrained. For example, the school libraries and readership activities were not integrated into routine classroom teaching and learning activities by teachers. Additionally, pupils' and teachers' interests in reading and using the libraries are low. This limits the utilisation of the books and puts the sustainability of the libraries in jeopardy.

### **Teacher professional development**

The review established that teachers' pedagogical and professional development progressed hand in hand with the implementation of the literacy projects. The literacy projects reviewed had pedagogical components for enhancing teachers' capacity in thematic and need-based areas. The practice was vital and a good strategy for sustainability and institutionalisation because teachers are frontline implementers of the project activities. In addition, the quality of literacy instruction depends on the quality of teachers' competences in implementation and delivery of project activities. For example, in-service training on the 3Rs, peer supervision, and methodology are consistent with teacher pedagogical improvements. In line with teacher pedagogy, Markee (1997: 397) argues that, "teachers' pedagogical choices cannot be made simply on the basis of abstract principles written in the curriculum or textbooks, but need to accommodate the realities of each teaching situation in its own right". Markee continues, making the case that teachers must perceive change to be relatively advantageous to them if they are to accept it. For teachers to own an innovation, they need to be given the opportunity to clarify their ideologies and ideas. Additionally, under the Vitabu project, teachers were trained on procurement skills of books, and, hence, enhanced sustainability of the readers. More so, under the Children Project, lead teachers were trained to mentor and facilitate professional development activities at school level. However, most of the projects are introduced to teachers without initial engagement. As such, they implement the project activities mechanically with little creativity or behavioural change. This is what

has turned out to be detrimental to the effectiveness and sustainability of most of the literacy innovations.

### **Institutionalisation and integration**

Based on two of the projects reviewed, the review found that the interventions were integrated into teachers' training colleges. This was a very strategic and sustainable arrangement because institutionalising the interventions ensures replicability, continuity, and ownership. Hall and Hewings (2001) observe that, for people to be persuaded to adopt an innovation, the innovation should be rationalized in their self-interest. Therefore, integrating literacy innovations into teacher training curriculum could rationally influence acceptance. However, the Ministry of Education and Training needs to streamline all the interventions, and recommend an innovation that will stand the test of time in changing the fortunes of learning outcomes in Tanzania. This is because of the diverse and technical nature of literacy innovations initiated by the multilateral agencies.

### **Community engagement and local partnerships**

The review recognises the strategies of the different organisations in engaging with universities, government, and communities. The universities harness technical and professional support, communities mobilise local resources, while government provides oversight in terms of monitoring, and supervision. According to Irvin (2010), community involvement in supporting literacy activities at the school can enhance the schools' literacy programme by supporting the success of literacy improvement efforts through regular two-way communication and sponsorship of literacy related activities. Onukaogu et al. (2005) further recommend that careful planning and community support to libraries could be a wonderful resource for children and their parents. This can encourage parental participation in the education of their children, such as joint parents and children reading sessions, as in the TusomeVitabu Project. However, the communities were not empowered to mobilise more resources to procure more books for the schools. This makes sustainability difficult.

Relatedly, the community libraries empowered community members to improve their livelihoods by exposing them to books related to their economic activities. For example, the TusomeVitabu Project motivated some community members to borrow and read books related to their social wellbeing, with subjects like health, family planning,

and economic activities such as farming. The findings relate to the Asselin and Doiron (2016) study which found that village libraries are strategically positioned in the ways their programmes and activities are interwoven with schools, adult education, health, women, family and youth organisations. The libraries connect to community values and uplift quality of life as the knowledge and skills acquired from reading the books are applied in the day to day economic activities. This is a holistic nature of education provided by the libraries which is important for socio-economic development. Similarly, the CBP ensured that teachers and students had access to books that reflect Tanzanian culture and experiences. In this way, the mission of education is achieved.

However, under the CBP project, teachers were not engaged to write their own story books. Although teachers were routinely consulted on the value and use of the books, their engagement was limited to feedback only and not practically engaging in producing socio-cultural and age appropriate readers.

### **School infrastructural developments**

The review indicated that libraries were constructed, leading to improvement of school facilities in the beneficiary communities. During the evaluation of the TusomeVitabu Project in 2007, functional libraries were found to have increased from 10% to 96%. In addition, 97% of school libraries visited had established proper library lending services. Use of libraries was further included in the official school timetable. This made reading materials, both reference and readers, accessible to learners and led to a remarkable reduction in the textbook- pupil ratio. Therefore, investing in hardware not only guarantees sustainability but also continues to provide a literacy rich environment, especially for the rural poor and resource-constrained communities. For example, in the Bukoba and Muleba districts, school stakeholders had to construct reading huts to cope with the challenge of reading space. Hence, constructing school libraries provided opportunities to enhance literacy activities supporting education and learning within a unique social context as noted by Dent, Goodman, and Kevane (2014). Indeed, schools have unique social challenges, which were addressed through the interventions.

## **Main Challenges, Conclusion and Recommendations**

### **Challenges**

#### ***Sustainability***

The findings reveal inadequate strategies for making school libraries and readership activities part of the whole primary school development and classroom teaching-learning activities. The centralisation of project activities by government means inadequate local control, participation and diversity. This made it difficult to sustain the projects as local communities could not contribute materially and technically in terms of project delivery. For example, if communities contribute towards the procurement of more books/readers, construct more reading space and participate in meetings, they own the projects. Therefore, the lack of genuine coordination at the global and country level makes it hard for multilateral donors to fill all financial gaps (Benavot & UNESCO, 2015), (Pauline, Liesbet, Katie, & Asma, 2013). Government and community participation and contributions would have filled such gaps.

#### ***Replication of best practices***

None of the projects reviewed covered the whole country. For example, the CBP had 13 districts only, while the TusomeVitabu Project covered 16 districts. This means that many Tanzanian children are left out in such interventions. In addition, these projects did not have clear strategies for replication. For example, while most classrooms in Tanzanian schools had bare walls, the CBP programme schools were filled with stimulating learning materials and innovative child-friendly learning aids. These projects ended at pilot stage, however, and the government is expected to take it up despite limited resources. The replication should be based on the efficacy of methodology of the intervention, practical application in different contexts, and current conceptualisation in order to yield similar or better desired results (Coyne et al, 2013).

#### ***Impact of interventions***

The evaluation reports and documents on the literacy interventions are not clear on the extent to which literacy or learning has improved. If there is improvement, what is the extent of improvement or performance? Is it by 5% or 10%? This is not made clear to stakeholders, apart from general statements such as: literacy has improved or learners' performance has improved. Additionally, learning outcomes of pupils improve according to the level of implementation and uptake of the

literacy projects. The uptake largely depends on the in-puts and efficacy in executing project activities. For example, the evaluation report of the CBP (2012) indicated that the more a school implements, the higher a teacher's rating on active teaching. Additionally, the report highlighted that there was no statistically significant difference between intervention and control schools on the teacher and text variables in May 2009.

### *Philosophical and ideological differences*

The multilateral agencies sometimes set conditions which are difficult to comply with. Beneficiaries are expected to demonstrate practices that conform to requirements of donor agencies in order to get financial support for projects such as good governance. More so, there has been a recent demand to comply with national and international norms on environmental and self-regulations (Vives, 2004). Similarly, the agencies have their own philosophical differences, which sometimes constitute conflict of roles, loyalty and trust for implementers, and local experts. The multilateral agencies have different models, which in most cases are not coordinated. For example, under the TusomeVitabu Project, books were directly procured from sellers, some of whom were non-registered booksellers, while under the CBP books provided were locally made to focus on local culture.

## **Conclusion**

The role of the corporate multilateral agencies in offering opportunities for improvement of learning outcomes of Tanzanian children is evident, recognised, and important. Despite unique difficulties experienced by the literacy interventions, they have been marked on the whole by achievements in promoting reading culture. However, the literacy interventions remain short-term alternatives to literacy development. Therefore, this paper makes a strong appeal to the corporate multilateral agencies, Tanzanian government, and communities to support, sustain and institutionalize the literacy innovations to keep pace with the SDG 2030 agenda of ensuring equitable, inclusive and quality education, as well as government's Development Vision 2025.

## **Recommendations for Policy and Practice**

To consolidate, increase and sustain achievements of literacy projects initiated or supported by corporate multilateral agencies, I recommend that:



The government, through the Ministry of Education and Training, should decentralize project management to ensure that beneficiary communities, schools and key duty bearers in education own the projects. The role of central government should be to provide logistic and technical support. In this way, the habits, attitudes and perceptions of all stakeholders and local communities regarding the literacy innovations can be changed. This helps to create a sense of ownership, promote participation, and better control projects, thus promoting sustainability of the projects.

The Government of Tanzania, through the Ministry of Education and Training, should streamline and coordinate the different literacy interventions with the possibility of integrating best models into the national curriculum, especially teacher education curriculum, government plans, and budget. In this way, best practices can be replicated, sustained and scaled up to the whole country.

The philosophy of education in Tanzania since Education and Training Policy 1995 is “Education for self-reliance”. This philosophy guides the planning and practice of education activities and ensures that theory is translated into practice. Therefore, the Government of Tanzania should ensure that the multilateral agencies are guided by the philosophy in order to reflect the country’s values, aspirations, and principles. This helps both local and international experts to operate in conflict free environments in terms of offering expertise and relevance related to the donor-funded literacy projects.

Local and district education departments should create awareness by sensitising beneficiary communities about the importance of the literacy projects in enhancing literacy development. Such awareness makes the stakeholders informed and demonstrates commitment and accountability in the implementation of the project activities. For any change initiative to thrive, the stakeholders and education leaders at both national and local levels should be well informed for the purpose of buy-in so that they offer quality support, mentorship and supervision of the project activities. The support and mentorship would ensure continuation of the project activities.

At school level, teachers are in most cases the principal implementers of project activities. Therefore, to ensure the project activities are integrated into classroom teaching and learning, the implementing agencies and education stakeholders should encourage and strengthen teachers to form networks of teachers to enable them to share classroom and school-based micro innovations in teaching and learning such as:

managing large classes, using learner centred pedagogy, and improving learner performance. This is because of the different levels of expertise, implementation, and uptake of the literacy projects.

The main limitation of this paper was its design, which focused more on review of project reports, documents, and relevant books with limited field work. Although the reviewer has in-depth knowledge drawn from similar studies in both the Tanzanian and Ugandan context, there is need for more persuasive findings and argument in relation to this sub-theme. Hence, future studies could utilise both primary and secondary data collected from intervention sites, and research beneficiaries, as this is an area of interest in an era of globalisation.

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## CHAPTER 17

# Challenges Facing the Implementation of a Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET) System in Tanzanian Technical Institutions

*Mariam Ally Tambwe*

### **Abstract**

Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET) is a leading paradigm for innovating technical and vocational education and training today. This paper investigated the challenges facing the implementation of the CBET system in Tanzania's technical institutions. The study employed a mixed research approach which utilised an exploratory research design. The study utilised a sample of 150 teachers from the College of Business Education, Tanzania Institute of Accountancy and Dar es Salaam Institute of Technology, three deputy rectors dealing with academics, nine heads of department and two officials from the National Council for Technical Education. Questionnaires, interviews, literature reviews and observation were used in order to allow for triangulation. The quantitative data were analysed using descriptive analysis like percentages, mean and standard deviation, while qualitative data were analysed using content analysis. The findings reveal various challenges, including low understanding of the CBET concept, lack of

support facilities and resources, large class sizes, lack of motivation of some teachers due to unfavourable working conditions, and low student cooperation. These findings led to various opportunities, including provision of CBET pedagogy training to teachers to improve their understanding on CBET and enhance its implementation. Thus, it is concluded that competency based teaching approaches are not well implemented in Tanzanian technical institutions and more efforts need to be devoted to the development of teachers' and principals' understanding of CBET approaches.

**Key words:** *Competency-based Education and Training, technical institutions, challenges, implementation*

## **Introduction**

Competency-based education and training (CBET) is not new; the approach was developed in the field of vocational training in the late 1970s. CBET is an approach that emphasises the development of skills or competencies which are required in the world of work. In CBET, the focus is shifted from the content or knowledge to outcomes derived from the requirements of employment (Kyobe and Rugamayo, 2005). It has been noted by various scholars that there are various challenges hindering effective implementation of a CBET system. This study aims to assess the challenges facing implementation of CBET systems in Tanzanian technical institutions.

## **Background of CBET in Tanzania**

Since independence, Tanzania has been working hard towards quality education as a response to societal needs and consciousness, and on new ways of thinking, practice, and methods of inquiry in education. In 2005, Tanzania introduced competency based education, which led to the development of competency-based learning and competency-based assessment in secondary education (World Bank, 2011; Kafyulilo, et al. 2012). In 2006, competency-based education was introduced in primary education as well (Woods, 2008). Since 2006 when competency-based education became operational in both primary and secondary schools, there have been serious financial and human commitments to retrain and support teachers, head teachers and other education professionals to develop the necessary competencies and confidence to effectively handle competency based education (Woods, 2008; Kafyulilo, et al. 2012). The introduction of competency-based education is the second

major pedagogical change in the country after the first change that took place in 1967, when Education for Self-Reliance was introduced.

In Tanzania, the shift from knowledge-based education and training (KBET) to a CBET system is influenced by the Development Vision 2025, which advocates that Tanzania become a nation with a high level of education at all levels and produce the quantity and quality of people sufficiently equipped with the requisite knowledge and skills to meet the challenges of development at local and international levels (URT, 1991). It is hoped that by adopting the CBET system, technical institutions will be able to produce people who are competent in their workplaces and who can spearhead the country to its desired vision (Mrowicki, 1986; Weddel, 2006; Thinkwise, 2007; Kafyulilo, et al. 2012). It has been about 10 years since its inception, but its implementation is still questionable and is faced with various challenges which hinder its success. In this paper, we focus on assessing the challenges facing implementation of a competency-based teaching approach in Tanzanian technical institutions in order to identify challenges hindering effective implementation of CBET.

## **Statement of the Problem**

Although it is now about ten years since the inception of CBET in technical institutions, there is no clear evidence of its appropriate implementation in these institutions. The main implementers of CBET system are teachers, but there is a very big challenge in the preparation and recruitment of the teachers. The basics for technical teaching require the teacher to possess subject knowledge, pedagogic experience and practical skills (European Commission, 2015; Jeanne, 2014). The current situation in most technical institutions does not reflect these three basic requirements. Teachers are recruited based on possession of subject knowledge after passing a university degree, but lack pedagogic and technical skills. The responsibility is left to employers to provide short term on the job training on pedagogy which mostly does not have the expected impact as teachers are already influenced by the long time knowledge based system in their prior education systems.

In addition, although the government of Tanzania claims its education system follows the CBET approach, after reviewing pre-primary, primary, secondary and TVET education policies, there is no evidence to indicate the extent of CBET implementation. The author has reviewed various studies (Kyafulilo, et al. 2012; Makunja, 2016; EU, 2015; Wood 2007; Alphonse, 2008; Mgalla and Mbulanya, 2008; Komba and

Nkumbi, 2008) which reported a shortage of well qualified and expert teachers to implement a CBET system. In these studies, it was found that, to a large extent, teachers still teach using traditional instructional approaches and students learn through memorisation. This study aims to assess the challenges facing the implementation of CBET approaches in Tanzanian technical institutions. This main objective is further sub-divided into four specific objectives:

- i) To identify the teachers' level of CBET understanding
- ii) To examine the extent of teachers' CBET practice/implementation in classes
- iii) To identify challenges hindering effective implementation of the CBET system in Tanzanian technical institutions
- iv) To propose strategies to ensure proper implementation of the CBET system in Tanzania.

## **Literature Review**

### **Conceptual definitions**

#### ***Competency***

Various authors have defined the concept of competency. According to Jallow (2011), a competency is a statement of learning outcomes for a skill or body of knowledge. He adds that when students demonstrate a competency, they are demonstrating their ability to do something (showing the outcome of the learning process). Sullivan (2005) views competency as a set of skills, knowledge and behaviours' someone needs to have achieved in order to perform tasks, or activities at school and in the world of work. Kouwenhoven (2003:126) adds, "... it is the capability to choose and apply an integrated combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes with the intention to realise a task in a certain context, while personal characteristics such as motivation, self-confidence, and willpower are part of that context."

In this study, competency refers to an integrated set of skills, knowledge, and attitudes that enable one to effectively perform the activities of a given occupation or function to the standards expected at school and later in public, in the private sector or for self-employment.

#### **CBET**

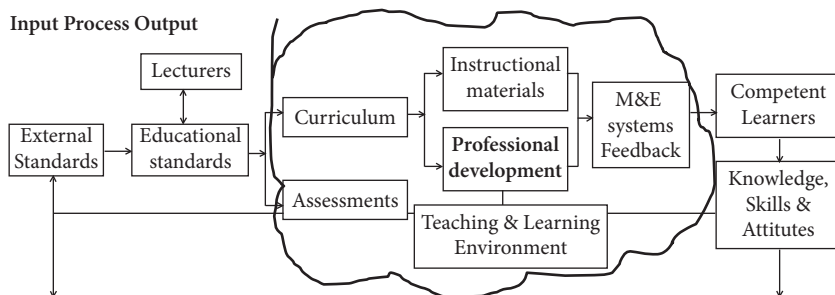
Education that is focused on what students can do, rather than what they can learn about, is competency-based education. Training to become a competency-based educator requires studying various teaching

and learning theories that focus on learning outcomes with specific, measurable definitions of knowledge, skill and learner behaviour. Competencies are a set of skills, knowledge and behaviours someone needs to have achieved in order to perform tasks, jobs or activities in the world of work (Hager & Hyland, 2003).

### Conceptual framework for CBET system

As a model for CBET design and implementation, the approach is typically one which controls and assesses learning through establishing pre-set objectives and outcomes, which might relate to skills, attitudes or values. Figure 17.1 below provides a model for the development of a CBET approach.

**Figure 17.1: Model for Competency-Based Education and Training**  
**Input Process Output**



Source: Adopted from Lorna (2005) and modified by the author (2016)

The technique for constructing a competency-based program involves backwards planning and asks the question, what do students need to learn to become successful adults? The question is answered by convening meetings with the business, political, social, cultural and environmental sectors (stakeholders) to define the criteria for success. These become external standards for success. Educators/teachers then take this information and convert it to learning outcomes or specific statements of behaviour that students must perform, which become the educational standards, as well as define when these standards should be mastered for each education level.

After knowing what students need to learn at each education level, defining what needs to be learned is the next step. Since most institutions teach subjects, specific outcomes need to be extracted from the external standards to define curriculum for a specific subject. This is one reason why some educators supported interdisciplinary curriculum, because it aligns better with real world outcomes.



With the creation of minimum performance standards that indicate the lowest level of performance acceptable, it is then possible to create a curriculum and the means to assess student performance related to the curriculum (Lorna, 2005).

The minimum standards also provide a framework for creating assessments. Assessment is much broader than testing. What is key here is that assessments are aligned with the curriculum which, in turn, is aligned to the standards, and that they measure learning in terms of how students perform using a real world situation as much as possible. This approach is referred to as contextual learning. To ensure that curriculum and assessment are implemented properly, educators/teachers must consider developing appropriate instructional materials to support learning activities. In addition, teachers will need to be trained in how to use the new materials since the methodology of a CBET system requires shifting from a teacher to a student-centred approach.

This professional development is a key component in CBET so that teachers can continuously improve in their implementation of a quality educational system. Teachers should continually undergo training which will sharpen their knowledge and skills so that they can disseminate proper competencies to the students. To determine effectiveness and ensure CBET is implemented properly, a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system is needed. Over time, the M&E system provides feedback to different parts of the system so that adjustments can be made, whether changing standards and tests, or revising training modules. M&E should be within institutions and outside to see the employability and performance of graduates in the job industry. M&E should also be done in input and process, as well as output, in order to ensure smooth implementation of CBET in the country.

This description is admittedly brief but sufficient to gain some understanding of what a CBET system should resemble. It is within this framework that the new national CBET will be analysed. The author feels that the approach is not implemented systematically, as it is supposed to be. Thus, this study was conducted in order to identify the challenges facing effective CBET implementation and proposes strategies on how to overcome the identified challenges.

## **Methodology**

The author acknowledges that there is no single research method adequate or that suffices in collecting reliable and valid data, as explained by various scholars (Robson 2002; Creswell 2005, Saunders

et al. 2009). Therefore, this study employed a mixed research approach which utilised an exploratory research design as a means of offsetting the weakness or biases found in each research method. The study adopted an exploratory research design because, according to Robson (2002), an exploratory study is a valuable means of finding out “what is happening; [to] seek new insights, ask questions and to assess phenomena in a new light”. Thus, it gave new insights into the challenges facing CBET system implementation in Tanzanian technical institutions. The study utilised the sample of 150 teachers from the College of Business Education (CBE), Tanzania Institute of Accountancy (TIA) and the Dar es Salaam Institute of Technology (DIT), who were randomly sampled, three deputy rectors dealing with academics, nine heads of departments and two officials from NACTE who were purposively sampled by virtue of their positions. Questionnaires, interviews, and literature reviews were used in order to allow for triangulation. Questionnaires were personally administered to 150 teachers and deputy rectors, heads of departments and National Council for Technical Education (NACTE) officials were interviewed. The quantitative data collected were analysed using descriptive analysis like percentages, mean and standard deviation, while qualitative data were analysed using content analysis.

## **Findings and Discussion**

### **The level of teachers understanding about CBET**

Findings indicated that the majority of lecturers (60%) believe they have sufficient knowledge of competency based teaching approaches and rate their understanding of CBET as moderate.

### **The extent of teachers practice/ implementation of CBET in classrooms**

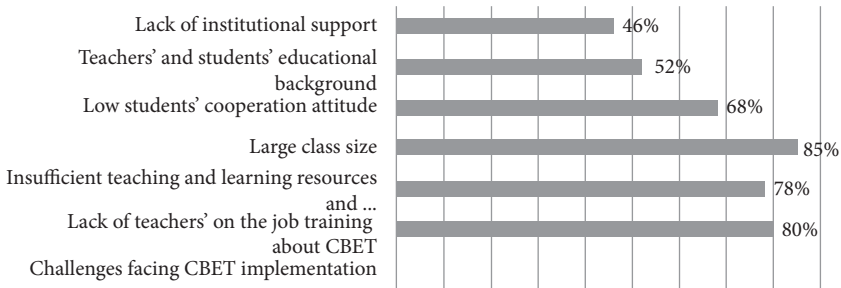
As it was with the level of CBET understanding, 50% of teachers perceived their practices rate of CBET implementation to be moderate. However, the majority of them (78%) were not able to prepare a competency based lesson plan and even deliver lessons using CBET approaches. The author observed the teachers using traditional instructional approaches in teaching.

### **Challenges facing CBET implementation**

The data collected from the interviews and questionnaires show the challenges facing implementation of CBET in Tanzania technical

institutions, as indicated in Figure 17.2 below, which is followed by an explanation.

**Figure 17.2: Challenges Facing CBET Implementation**



### ***Lack of teachers' on-the-job training about CBET***

The findings confirmed that lack of proper on-the-job training was one of the major challenges hindering effective implementation of CBET. About 120 respondents (80%) showed that lack of teacher on-the-job training about CBET limited teachers' pedagogical knowledge and skills to apply CBET approaches during the teaching and learning process. During the interviews, one head of department from institution C explained:

“.... Teachers have not received intensive on the job training about CBET, hence most of them lack the required knowledge and skills on CBET, which hinders its effective implementation in Tanzanian technical institutions”.

Another interviewee, a deputy rector, claimed that:

“.... In our institution sometimes we provide short courses on CBET for new teachers, but the time for training is too short and the coverage cannot provide the required CBET knowledge and skills, which hinders its successful implementation.”

The percentages and the statements of the interviewee show that lack of teacher on-the-job training on CBET hinders effective implementation in Tanzanian technical institutions. As a result, teachers fail to implement CBET because they lack the required pedagogical and technical skills required to deal with students' complex learning problems, which affects the quality of education in the country by producing graduates without the required skills and competencies in the labour market.

### *Insufficient teaching and learning resources/facilities*

The findings indicated that in the technical institutions surveyed, there are insufficient teaching and learning facilities/resources such as textbooks, library facilities, computer laboratories, classrooms, etc. Out of 150 respondents who filled in the questionnaires, 117 (78%) explained that there is insufficient teaching and learning facilities/resources to allow for effective CBET implementation. The availability of appropriate teaching and learning facilities/resources could help students to participate actively in the learning process. In tandem with that, the results reveal that in some technical institutions the book: student ratio ranged from 1:12 to 1:26 or even higher. In the interview, one head of the department said:

“.... the textbooks and reference books are not enough to satisfy the number of our students, even the available books do not reflect the current curriculum and lack clarity on how to teach as per CBET requirements. For the case of classrooms, library space, computer laboratory, computers, etc., the situation is worse.”

Insufficient teaching and learning facilities/resources hinder effective implementation of CBET, and students cannot develop the independent learning skills, problem-solving, and inquisitive minds; they are therefore deprived of the opportunities to be competent and skilled.

### *Large class size*

Large class sizes were another challenge which was outlined by the majority (85%) of the respondents. The number of students in the classroom was too big for the capacity of the class and caused overcrowding. The author observed that in some institutions surveyed, the teacher: student ratio ranged from 1: 90-100 or higher, which is against NACTE standards which require the ratio to be 1:45. In this situation, teachers failed to implement CBET methods. One head of department interviewed complained that:

“..... classes are overcrowded in such a way that it is difficult to move around and interact with students. Imagine I teach a class of more than 100 students and I teach 4 streams for one subject. I have 3 different subjects to teach in such an environment. Will I be able to complete the curriculum on time if I apply CBET methods?”

From the above finding it is clear that large class sizes tend to affect student-teacher interactions and even prevent student-to-student exchanges during discussions in the class. This hinders CBET system

implementation, and teachers fail to apply learner-centred interactive methods as required by CBET systems.

### ***Low student cooperation attitude***

The results from the respondents show that there is a low student cooperation attitude in respect of the CBET system. The descriptive statistics show that 68% of the respondents reveal that students extended low cooperation to teachers who tried to involve students in the teaching and learning process in order to trigger a creative, problem solving attitude and inquisitive mindset. Students were not cooperative when given class activities requiring them to solve problems and think critically, as they are used to a spoon-feeding approach which is based on memorization and cramming. Students of primary and secondary schools have not been oriented to a learner-centred approach.

### ***Teachers' and students' educational culture and background***

The results from the questionnaires reveal that 52% of the respondents contended that their educational background constrained them from effective operationalisation of CBET, as they have studied using the traditional teacher-centred approach and it is now very difficult for them to adapt to the new approach. One interviewee explained that:

“.... To speak the truth, I find it very difficult to apply this approach in teaching as I have no experience with it. I am teaching using the style of my teacher. To adapt to this new approach I need time, training and good working environment”.

The implication of these findings is that teachers' educational culture and background hinder them from adjusting to this new teaching and learning approach. There is a need to review curricula from lower levels, such as pre-primary, primary and secondary education in order to prepare students for the CBET system.

### ***Lack of institutional support***

The results confirmed that lack of institutional support was one of the major challenges hindering effective implementation of CBET. About 69 respondents (46%) showed that lack of institutional support limits CBET effective implementation in technical institutions. One interviewee complained that:

“ .... The institutions have to create a conducive and friendly teaching and learning environment for effective CBET implementation. I will give you a few examples in our institute: we were supposed to

prepare teaching manuals to suit the CBET system after reviewing the curriculum but the management refused to facilitate the process because it needed to pay teachers for that task. If you take the issue of student overcrowding in classes, it is done purposely because if students are divided into small classes teachers will have more teaching hours and have to be paid overtime for extra classes. The institutions being too conscious of cost have jeopardized CBET implementation in one way or the other. Even the issue of CBET on the job training is not taken seriously by institutions.”

These results are in line with results from other studies (Kyobe & Rugamoyo, 2005; EU, 2015; Mosha, 2012; Makunja, 2016 and Kyafulilo, et al., 2012).

### **Strategies to overcome the challenges**

In the questionnaires and interviews administered, respondents were asked to propose strategies on how to overcome the identified challenges in implementing CBET in Tanzanian technical institutions. The results are presented hereunder as follows:

#### ***Provision of on the job teacher training on CBET***

About 138 (92%) of the respondents insisted that teachers should be trained regularly through seminars and workshops so as to update their knowledge and skills in order to adapt to fast changing technology developments and job market demands. One deputy rector interviewed recommended that:

“..... Training is a right for an employee - institutions and the government should provide frequent on the job teacher training for the sake of updating teachers’ knowledge and skills for effective implementation of the CBET system. I propose the training should take a long time, like 3 months to one year, so as to equip teachers with the required competencies”.

From these results, it implies that, it is mandatory for institutions to provide frequent on-the-job teacher training, as it helps them to update their skills and progress professionally.

#### ***Provision of teaching and learning facilities/resources***

To overcome this challenge it was proposed that NACTE, which is the supervisory body for technical institutions, inspect the institutions from time to time through surprise visits to see the availability of all the required resources for effective CBET implementation. About 79% of the respondents recommend development of book and training

manuals relevant to the CBET system, as the majority of the available books are too old and were designed for knowledge based systems and do not fit the CBET system.

### ***Reduction of class size to the NACTE quality standards***

The majority of respondents, 68%, proposed that institutions should adhere to NACTE quality standards requiring the class to have 45 students. This will be beneficial to both teachers and students and will lead to improved performance of students, as teachers will have manageable class size and hence be able to assist students with learning difficulties.

### ***A student's reception of CBET begins in lower education levels***

In order to improve students' attitude towards CBET, 60% of the respondents proposed that students should be exposed and oriented on CBET from primary schools, so that they are used to the learner centred approach. Exposing students to CBET from primary schools will help to create a competent workforce of problem solvers in the society.

### ***Provision of the required institutional support***

About 58% of the respondents recommended timely provision of the required institutional support by creating a conducive and friendly teaching and learning environment, providing on-the-job training, providing the required teaching and learning facilities/resources, providing effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to evaluate implementation of the CBET system, and motivating teachers who strive hard to implement CBET system.

## **Conclusion and Recommendation**

This study concludes that teachers' understanding of CBET is moderate. The majority of teachers (78%) were not able to prepare a competency based lesson plan and even deliver lessons using CBET approaches. Tanzanian technical institutions face many challenges which hinder effective CBET implementation. In light of these challenges, various opportunities emerged, including the provision of CBET pedagogy training to teachers. Institutions were recommended to extend the required institutional support timeously; and the government, through the ministry of education, is advised to ensure that the reviewed policies are well implemented, as planned, from primary education onwards, in order to meet the country's Development Vision 2025.

## Policy Implications

- The policy makers should introduce and enforce registration and licensing requirements for teachers at technical institutions
- Regulatory authority NACTE should follow up with technical institutions to ensure effective implementation of CBET.

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## CHAPTER 18

# Challenges and Opportunities for Authentic Student Participation in School Governance: Lessons from Zanzibar

*Mohammed Juma Abdalla*

### **Abstract**

Policies and student participation structures provide room for student participation in school governance in secondary schools in Zanzibar. Nonetheless, availability of policy guidelines and participation structures do not necessarily lead to authentic participation. This chapter draws from the PhD study that sought to explore the dynamics of student participation in school governance through sequential mixed-methods research design conducted in one district of Zanzibar. The quantitative data were gathered through a questionnaire, distributed to a sample of 561 respondents, in 21 secondary schools. An in-depth qualitative case study in two schools followed, whereby data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussion and document analysis. The study revealed students' participation in school governance mainly through student government and school committee. The study also found that, student participation is hampered by a number of factors such as unbalanced power relations and socio-cultural beliefs and practices, which favoured adults at the expense of students, and gender issues which disadvantaged girls. Other issues were inadequate

participation skills among students and limitations in, and the flouting of the policy guidelines in the process of student participation in school governance. Overall, the issues surrounding the practice of student participation in school governance impede the provision of opportunity for students to learn democratic principles and attitudes, through practice. These findings have a number of implications for the practitioners and policy makers. There is a need to review the policy on student participation to allow more equitable opportunities for student participation in school governance. Besides, there should be deliberate efforts to minimize or eliminate the policy-practice gap, unfavourable socio-cultural beliefs and practices. In addition, concerted efforts are needed to equip students with essential skills for authentic participation.

**Keywords** – *authentic student participation, power relations, school governance, sociocultural beliefs and practices,*

## **Introduction**

Student participation in school governance is hailed as an effective way of inculcating democratic values, principles and citizenship among children. However, for that to happen, such participation needs to be authentic, whereby student have voice, autonomy and adequate skills and competencies for participation (Leung et al., 2014; Leung et al., 2016). Literature on student participation in developing countries shows gloomy picture on even mere participation, let alone authentic one. This chapter reports on the practice of student participation in school governance in secondary schools in one district of Zanzibar.

## **Background**

Zanzibar has a long history of involving students in school affairs. Before its independence in 1963, schools in Zanzibar had prefect system. whereby some students became school prefects, class prefects and deputy school prefects and deputy class prefects. The purpose of that system was to control the student body and enforce discipline among students by using those prefects as supervisors of their fellow students.

After independence, more room for student participation was accorded through constitutional and policy changes. The 1984 Zanzibar Constitution gave limited management powers to district and local government, and consequently some power to schools for school based management (The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, 2006). Furthermore, the Zanzibar Education Policy of 1991 reiterated devolving education administrative powers to the regional and district education

officers and schools (Ministry of Education, 1991). Another policy guideline was the Zanzibar Education Decree of 1982, which provided for the establishment of School Committee (SC) in each school whereby the head of the student government is an ex-officio member. School Committees were supposed to undertake some school governance roles to enhance school- community relationship and to promote school development (The Zanzibar Education Decree No. 6 of 1982).

In addition, the Ministry of Education, through its Work Guideline No. 7(1999), provided for each secondary school to have a student government. The key purposes of forming student government were to engage students in doing some management functions especially those related to managing students' affairs and providing opportunity for students to learn the democratic principles and leadership skills through practice (Ministry of Education, 1999).

The new policy guidelines also changed the purpose of student participation in school governance with the arriving of multi-party system in 1995 to inculcating democratic values and principles among the students, and preparing them for their citizenship role in the future (Ministry of Education, 1999). The policy guidelines provide room for students to participate in structures that matched that of government organs namely, executive, judiciary and legislative wings.

### **School Governance**

All organisations including schools are arenas where there is the exercise of authority for governing (Foster & Smith, 2001). School governance is the exercise of authority in "creating, implementing, supervising and evaluating policies and rules, which guide and govern the actions of the school and its members" (Motimele, 2005, p. 2). School governance roles thus, include participation in decision making on school policies, rules and regulations. School governance also include setting of the appropriate conditions for implementation, monitoring and evaluating the implementation process.

Student participation in school context may mean several things ranging from merely attending school to being fully involved in the running of the school. However, authentic participation entails taking active roles in school life which "encompass all aspects of school life and decision-making where students may make a contribution, informally through individual negotiation as well as formally through purposely-created structures and mechanisms" (Jeruto and Kiprop, (2011, p. 92). One key participation area in school governance is in decision-making

which can be in the fields of organisation of instruction, personal management, planning and structure in determining programme of study, opening and closure of school, and in the field of resources allocation and use (Ainley and McKenzie, 2000; Leung et al., 2016). Other areas of participation include monitoring and supervising the implementation of decisions and rules and regulations passed by the school or beyond (Jeruto & Kiprop, 2011).

Student participation in all areas will continue to remain an ideal as several aspects of school governance such as personal management and decision-making in core school functions is done centrally or by non-students (Baganda, 2008). It is, however, not non-existent as Mncube and Harber (2013) found out that students in four secondary schools in two provinces of South Africa actively participated in teachers' appointment process and in school budgeting.

### Levels of Participation

Student participation can be at various levels. Hart (1992) and Shier (2011) developed a 'ladder of participation' that distinguishes different levels of child participation. These levels range from the minimal end of manipulation and tokenism, to the highest level of youth taking initiatives and sharing power with adults in decision-making. Hart (1992) and Shier (2001) models have a lot in common. Table 1 compares their levels of participation.

**Table 18.1: Comparison of Hart (1992) and Shier (2001) Levels of Participation**

| Hart's Level of participation                    | Shier's Level of participation                              |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8. Child-initiated, shared decisions with adults | Children share power and responsibility for decision making |
| 7. Child initiated and directed                  |                                                             |
| 6. Adult-initiated shared decision with children | Children are involved in decision making processes          |
| 5. Consulted and informed                        | Children's views are taken into account                     |
| 4. Assigned but informed                         | Children are supported in expressing their views            |
| 3. Tokenism                                      | Children are listened to                                    |
| 2. Decoration                                    |                                                             |
| 1. Manipulation                                  |                                                             |

Both Hart (1992) and Shier (2001) have posited a hierarchy of general levels or typologies of participation from the lower levels to higher and more complex levels. Besides, both models recognize that children participation involves power dynamics between students themselves and the adults. The higher the level, the more should the power be distributed or shared between students and adults. In addition, both models recognize the possibility of children participation being authentic or unauthentic as depicted in the higher levels and lower levels of participation respectively.

Authentic student participation requires more than involvement of students in school governance structures (Holdsworth, 1997; Anderson, 1998; Cumming, 1994). Participation can be authentic when students are “active, taken seriously, listened to, and doing work of consequence” (Wilson, 2002, p.1). Rudduck and Filding (2006) have added that authenticity, from the student perspective, rests on three things, namely, “whether students have been involved in determining the focus of consultation; whether the interest of adults in what they have to say is real or contrived; and whether there is discussion of their suggestions and active follow-through” (p. 226).

Apart from power dynamics, there are a number of factors that affect student participation in school government. These factors include the nature of decentralisation policies, community culture, attitude and practices, and students’ participations skills. The nature of decentralisation determines the power of various stakeholders including the students in the process of school governance. The common practice around the world is that the students have little power and voice in school governance (Barrera-Osorio, Fasih & Patrinos, 2009).

As schools are part of both micro and macro community, what happens in the community also influences what happen in schools. Anderson (1998) noted that community culture; attitudes and politics are always going to influence what is happening in schools.

In most developing countries community culture, attitudes and practices are not supportive of student participation. In Kenya, for example, despite having policies in place, the students are hardly involved in school decision making process. This is mostly due to societal assumption and views that students are minors, immature and lacking in the expertise and technical knowledge that is needed in the running of a school (Jeruto and Kiprop, 2011).

In Uganda, it is regarded as disrespectful for a child to speak before adults, let alone look adults in the eyes when they are giving an opinion,

and this attitude makes children hesitant to speak in front of adults. Similarly, adults feel uncomfortable with the child who expresses an opinion (Chiwela, 2010, p. 66)

In Zanzibar, the patronizing culture towards children and over emphasis on children's discipline influences and cements children's subordinate position in schools, which in turn can negatively affect their participation in school governance (UNICEF, 2010). Larsen (2009) has also acknowledged that, Zanzibar culture also emphasises that children should always show respect not only to their parents but also to all seniors and even to their contemporaries (Saleh, 2004). The tendency in such cultures is taken as acts of disrespect for children to talk as equal with adults (UNICEF, 2010).

Anderson (1998) argues that for authentic participation there must be not only the inclusion of diverse stakeholders but also that conditions that will enable those stakeholders once in the participation structures to have significant impact on decision-making. He pointed out that training provision is even more important when involving children in order to counter balance their inexperience on governance issues. Lack of training or empowerment can have undesired consequences. For example, Duma (2011) conducted a survey in two districts in KwaZulu Natal to explore views held by educators on the role of student leadership in the governance of rural secondary schools in South Africa. He found out that through the Representative Council of Learners students interfered in issues that they do not have any knowledge on. Duma (2011) noted that, as student participation in school governance involves, among other things, such functions as organizing, leading, planning, decision-making supervising and controlling, it is not enough that schools establish student governance structures only. It is equally important that they provide necessary training for students to have working knowledge of school governance.

Osler (2000) has argued the need for skills such as counselling, advocacy and listening skills, and conflict resolution if we want students to effectively participate in school governance.

### **Research Design and Methodology**

This chapter draws from a larger sequential mixed method study that sought to explore the dynamics of student participation in school governance in one district of Zanzibar from a sample of 21 secondary schools. Thus, throughout the study, pragmatic philosophical underpinnings were adopted. Both qualitative and quantitative

research methods were selected so as to get the best of results from the phenomenon under study (Doyle, Brandy & Byrne, 2009; Creswell 2012).

The quantitative survey helped to shed light on the extent of student participation in school governance and get an overview of the issues surrounding the student participation process. The quantitative survey employed five hundred and sixty (n=560) respondents of whom 476 (85%) respondents returned the questionnaire. This sample included the whole population of students, teachers and school administrators who held positions and/or had roles in the school governance structures.

Qualitative methodology was employed to explore, in depth, the issue surrounding the practice of student participation in school governance.. The qualitative strategies allowed the study of the phenomenon in a real setting and to incorporate participants' voices and the meanings they attach to their actions (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The in-depth qualitative phase used interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis for collecting data from a sample of head teachers, deputy head teachers, presidents of student government, members of the school committees, student advisors and students in two schools.

## **Data Analysis**

Data analysis involved development of initial codes for qualitative data and later on for refining the codes and developing themes. Codes and themes were repeatedly examined in the process of making meaning. Quantitative data were entered in Version 19 of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software for analysis and analysed descriptively to establish frequencies and percentages. This chapter draws mainly from the qualitative data.

## **Findings**

The findings revealed both opportunities for student participation in school governance as manifested in the availability of supportive policy guidelines, availability of participation structures in schools and students participations in those structures. The level of student participation, however, is enormously affected by unbalanced power relations, policy-practice gaps, participation skills among students and socio-cultural beliefs and practices.



## **Opportunities for Authentic Participation**

The study revealed availability of opportunities for student participation in school governance. These opportunities were manifested through the availability of accommodating policies, structures and students participation in those structures.

### **Presence of supportive policy guidelines**

The key policy guidelines, which allowed students' participation in school governance, were the Zanzibar Education Decree of 1982 and Ministry of Education Work Guidelines No. 7 of 1999. The Zanzibar Education Decree of 1982 provided for the establishment of School Committee (SC) in each school whereby the head of the student government is an ex-official member. School Committees are supposed to undertake some school governance roles to enhance school- community relationship and to promote school development (The Zanzibar Education Decree No. 6 of 1982). the Ministry of Education Work Guideline No. 7 of 1999) provided for each secondary school to have a student government. The key purposes of forming student government were to engage students in doing some management functions especially those related to managing students' affairs and providing opportunities for students to learn the democratic principles and leadership skills through practice (Ministry of Education, 1999). Possibilities of student participation was further reiterated by the Zanzibar Development Vision 2020 (The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, 2000), the Zanzibar Education Policy of 2006 and the Zanzibar Education Development Programme (ZEDP) which seeks to strengthen the powers and authorities of the regions, districts and schools; and to strengthen school committees and student governments (The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, 2006(Zanzibar Education Policy, 2006, p. 48).

### **Availability of the participation structures**

The findings showed that most of the schools had participation structures that would allow students to participate in school governance. Table 2 presents the available participation structures in schools against the number and percentage of respondents who acknowledged their presence.

**Table 18.2: Participation Structures Available in Schools**

| SN | Available Structure | No. and Percentage |
|----|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1  | School committee    | 469 (98.5%)        |
| 2  | Club                | 429 (90.1%)        |
| 3  | Student government  | 474 (99.6%)        |
| 4  | Student assembly    | 376 (79.0%)        |
| 5  | Subject panel       | 424 (89.1%)        |
| 6  | Class prefect       | 474 (99.6%)        |

Overwhelmingly participants acknowledged the participation structures in almost all school. Only student assembly was missing in about n=5 (21%) of the schools.

**Student participation in the participation structures**

As far as school governance was concerned, the evidence showed that students participated through two key structures, namely student government and school committee. The student government comprises of all-student members. In another participation structure, the school committee, the head of the student government participates as an ex-official member.

In addition to students being in the participation structures, it was also found that students undertook some governance roles in those structures. Students participated in student election ; in setting some student-related regulations; in supervising students’ discipline;and in leading and supervising co-curricular activities. All students, including those who did not have positions in the school governance structures, played the role of participating in student election. Students roles in dealing with issues related with students’ affairs came out very visibly, while the voices of students on school-wide issues was minimal and submerged in adults’ voices especially on governance roles undertaken by the school committee. The most vivid roles students were undertaking were the ones related to student affair especially supervising student disciplines and on co-curriculum activities.

However, there were incidences where students engaged in school-wide governance activities. In one of the school’s students participated in improving school infrastructure. The students furnished one classroom for the purpose of getting space for students in examination class to do revision at night. This process involved budgeting, fund raising and

supervising the work in collaboration with the school administration. In other incidences students, as members of school committee, were involved in decision making with adult members on improving school infrastructure.

## **Challenges for Authentic Participation**

Authentic participation was hindered in spite of the opportunities provided by policies, availability of student governance structures and the participation of students in those structures. . These challenges ranged from inadequacies in participation structures to the short falls in policies and in the practices of those responsible for implementing the policies. Furthermore, there were also other challenges that emanated from socio- cultural beliefs and practices.

## **Policy- related issues**

Two issues related to policies were found. First there were inadequacies in policies themselves. One prominent inadequacy was that the policies gave too much power to adults, namely, the teachers and the school administrators. Each school has an all- teacher committee, for example, that works as election committee and a judiciary. The committee had the responsibility of running the elections including vetting the contestants. An all-teachers committee has the responsibility to scrutinize all students who contest positions in student government and has the power to disallow any one from contesting on the basis of indiscipline or any other ‘weakness’. The teacher committee had the powers to dissolve any student body or any part of the body in case of “the failure to carry out their responsibilities or indiscipline or failure to be obedient to teachers or any other reason devoid of unfairness” (Ministry of Education, Work Guidelines, Article 5.3.3, 1999, p.9). This power was often used to leave out students who were disliked by teachers on flimsy excuses such as not being academically competent and being undisciplined.

The head teachers have the power to suggest names for elections for the positions of the chairperson and deputy chairperson to the student assembly; to appoint the secretary in the student assembly and student government; to suspend any student leader; dissolve student government; and to confirm the appointment of prime minister of the student government, and head of departments (Ministry of Education, Work Guidelines, 1999). These enormous powers held by teachers and school administrators were the key factors affecting the authentic participation among students.

## Issue related to policy implementation

One key area that showed weakness in policy implementation was the lack of or inactiveness of students assemblies in almost all schools. While the policy was clear that each school should have a students assembly as a legislative wing of student government, yet some schools did not have this organ. In the school that was selected for qualitative follow-up, it was found that the student assembly was inactive. Also, the current student government had no record of when the students assembly met. Students assembly could have been the best structure for participation in making rules and regulations, budgeting and act also as a watchdog for the student government.

In policy implementation, evidence revealed widespread breach of policy guidelines by teachers and school administrators. In the process of getting students to governing position, for example, it was found that in some cases class prefects were hand-picked by teachers because of their loyalty instead of engaging in open contest for the positions. In other cases, class prefects were elected through show of hands in classes instead of using secret ballot as suggested by the policy guidelines. In addition, in one school, the school prefect/head of student government was just elected by the members of the student government upon recommendation by teachers instead of what policy guidelines required that he/she contest for the position in an open contest and should be elected by a popular vote. The above procedures of selecting school prefect went against guidelines that prohibit teachers from proposing students to vie for any position as stipulated in article 5.1.3 of the Work Guidelines No. 7 of 1999. Secondly, the guidelines provided that all students should elect the head of the student government through secret ballot.

The above policy-practice gap is also an indication of abuse of power by teachers and school administrators. It signifies cases of teachers and school administrators using powers that were not given to them by policy guidelines. Yet there were other instances of abuse of power by teachers and school administrators. In one case it was found that teachers successfully campaigned against a students who vied for the position of a school prefect because he/she said during the campaign that he/she would abolish all students' contributions to school once he/she is elected to the post. This is a form of power abuse which Bachrach and Baratz (1970) called 'non-decision making'. Non-decision-making involves suppressing or preventing challenges to the status quo and

suppressing issues that threaten those with power going into the agenda for discussion.

### **Participation of Student Representative in School Committee**

Ideally, school committee is an avenue to engage students in school governance. However, a number of circumstances/challenges gravely water down their participation. First, the school committee has nine members, out of whom, only one member is a student and non-adult. This mere combination crippled student representation and participation in the school committee. Secondly, Zanzibar has patronizing culture whereby Children and females have lesser decision making capacity and minimum influence on the male adults. They also rank lower in status as compared to the male adults. (UNICEF, 2010). This was evident as one student member in the school committee put it blatantly that while he/she contributes ideas in the committee's meetings but he/she speaks only after everyone has contributed, as he/she could not speak before they have finished and he/she could not argue with them as they were elders, like his/her parents or teachers.

Third, students' participation in the school committee was limited to attending meetings only. They were not involved in undertaking other governance roles such as supervising the implementation of decisions taken by the committee and working in the community because of the other members' perceptions that students lacked experiences and should just set their priority on their learning which was on its own a huge task.

Finally, one school prefect maintained that he/she had never been given any training since his/her election to the post. This made them lack the necessary skills and competencies that are required for authentic participation not only in the school committee but also in the student government. As put by Cox et al. (2010) effective student participation in school governance calls for the issue of student training to be taken very seriously as authentic participation is a process that can only occur in a climate that encourages on-going involvement and empowerment.

### **Discussion and Implications**

While in many countries education is decentralised in the form of school-based management, school governance has often been a preserve of adults, namely school administrators, teachers and to a little extent parents. Efforts to involve students in school governance are likely to encounter uphill challenges and tend to be tokenistic. The mere availability of student participation structures in the form of

policies and governance structures, and even student participation in those structures, are necessary but inadequate for ensuring authentic participation. Authentic participation needs strong policies, genuine beliefs and implementation of those policies (Leung, Yuen, Cheng, & Chow, 2014). The inadequacies in policies and policy-practice gap contribute to unauthentic student participation in school governance. Hence, the unauthentic participation defeats the very purpose of involving students in school governance, which is to provide opportunity for them to learn through practicing the democratic principles as applied in the country at large.

Some participation structures have profound impact on student participation than others. The unavailability or inactiveness of student assembly, for example, limited student participation in setting rules and regulations and overseeing the work of student government. Besides, inactiveness of this structure limit space for debate between supporters and critics of various policies, which is key to building authentic participation and inculcating democratic principles (Westheimer & Kahne, 2003).

Students' authentic participation in school governance requires that students have power both in all-student governance bodies and students and adults body, namely the school committee. School arrangement and practices were found to put students at the lower rank of power relations. That arrangement and practice greatly compromised authentic student participation in both the student government and the school committee. The power relations issue was also found to lead to trivial student participation in school governance. This situation is similar to schools in Hong Kong, whereby school authorities have real powers and reluctantly shared very limited powers with the Student Unions. As a consequence, they limit the influence of student participation (Leung et al., 2014; Leung et al., 2016). Likewise in Zanzibar, students will always have to bear the brunt of power exercise by the adults.

The mere fact that there was only one student representative in a nine-member school committee handicaps authentic students' participation in the committee. Students felt isolated and as subordinate members of the committee. The belief that students need to focus more on their studies, make adults in the committee reluctant to involve students in undertaking management roles such as supervising the implementation of decisions taken by the committee. This practice does not make participation in school governance authentic. Similar conclusion was reached by Jeruto and Kiprop (2012) who found tokenistic participation

among students in Kenya secondary schools. The school authorities in Kenya merely asked about their opinion while excluding them from engaging in management and administrative issues.

The influence of societal culture and practices on impinging authentic student participation was also evident. Schools cannot be isolated from the society as what happen in the society affects the happenings and practices in schools. Society's patronizing culture over children affected students' authentic participation in school governance. Students were viewed as immature, inexperienced and incapable of participating in school governance as equal partner with adults.

These findings have implications for policy and practice. As policies are guiding principles for the practice there is need to have not only clear but also empowering and facilitative policies. The policies should provide clear guidelines for the practice. There is, therefore, need for revising the policy and policy guidelines that guide the practice of student participation in school governance. Besides, as the mere existence of polices would not guarantee authentic participation, there is need for setting systems in place to ensure that those policies are put into practice both in substance and in spirit. The policies must also provide clear sanctions on those individual who by-pass the policies.

Empowering policies should be put into practice to ensure that students trained so that they can engage in authentic participation. The training should empower students with key governance skills such as decision-making skills, conflict resolution skills, time management and debating skills, communication skills. These skills will empower student to efficiently and effectively participate in school governance. In his study in rural secondary schools in South Africa Duma (2011) found that while participation structures are important, yet more important still is empowering students with working knowledge of school governance, so as to enable students participate in school governance duties such as planning, organizing, leading, supervising, decision-making and controlling.

More important still, deliberate efforts need to be taken to combat negative socio-cultural practices and attitudes that hinder student participation in school governance. The socio-cultural attitudes and practices are deep-rooted in any given community,as norms. Consequently, they are difficult to change in a short period. With that in place, concerted efforts need to be made in sensitizing the community at large and the school community in particular. At the school level, socio-cultural practices can be tackled in school curriculum content and in the

teaching process. Both the sensitisation efforts and curriculum should, for example, put to the fore the negative socio-cultural stereotypes and their impacts on both the individuals and the community at large.

## Conclusion

Authentic student participation in school governance can provide enriching opportunities for inculcating democratic values and principles among students. The enculturation is important if students are to grow up as active members who would participate in and enhance democratic practices in their societies. It is high time, therefore, that deliberate and concerted efforts are taken to create appropriate participation structures, guiding policies, and effective strategies for implementation and supervision of policy guidelines. Strategies should as well be put in place to eradicate challenges that hinder authentic student participation in school governance.

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## Index

### A

Absenteeism 19, 121, 224  
Academic performance 33, 153, 154,  
156, 157, 159–162, 218, 221, 222,  
231  
Accountability 16, 22, 25, 165, 166,  
209, 211, 212, 214, 215, 216, 217,  
223, 224, 239  
Accountability systems 22  
Accra Declaration 16  
Active learning xix, 8, 52, 86, 87, 88,  
90, 91, 92, 93, 102, 179, 183, 188,  
190, 232  
Advanced Certificate of Secondary  
Education Examination (ACSEE)  
105, vi  
Advocacy xxi, 5, 64, 261  
African Development Bank 229  
Aga Khan Development Network  
(AKDN) vi, 1, 11, 22, 229  
Aga Khan Foundation Canada  
(AKFC) vi, 11  
Aga Khan University, the Institute  
for Educational Development in  
East Africa (AKU-IED-EA) vi, x,  
xiii, xiv,  
Age-appropriate 223  
Airtel 229  
Ambidextrous thinking 96, 99

American Phelps-Stokes

Commission 193, 203

Analysis xii, xx, 16, 32, 42, 68, 70, 73,  
75, 102, 108, 118, 139, 153, 154,  
155, 179, 182, 184, 185, 193, 207,  
218, 230, 231, 242, 248,  
Application 32, 41, 43, 67, 69, 79,  
102, 135, 152, 164, 168, 170, 184,  
188, 237

Asian Development Bank 229

Assessment xii, xvi, xvii, 12, 17, 23,  
24, 25, 35, 39, 40, 42, 43, 76, 82,  
83w, 93, 100, 115, 118, 130, 179,  
182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188,  
243, 246, 247

Assessment indicators 23, 243

Attitudes 40, 61, 64, 119, 148, 174,  
209, 211, 239, 243, 245, 246

Authentic student participation 256,  
257, 260, 268, 269, 270

Autism spectrum disorder (asd) vi,  
130, 131, 135, 136

Awareness 25, 48, 57, 60, 64, 139,  
141, 142, 143, 144, 147, 239

### B

Bandwidth 142

Barriers 6, 11, 13

Basic Education 16, 19, 35, 51, 52, 57,  
58, 58, 197

Basic literacy 92, 228  
 Behavioural change 234  
 Belgium Technical Corporation 229  
 Beliefs 6, 10, 12, 51, 107, 192, 194  
 Beneficiaries xii, 20, 172, 213, 238, 240  
 Best practices 44, 88, 216, 217, 237, 239  
 Big Results Now (BRN) vi, 103, 104, 108, 114  
 Big Results Now in Education (BRNiE) vi, 103, 108–114  
 Bilateral 4  
 Blended e-learning 179, 180, 183, 184, 187  
 Blended e-learning activities 179  
 Blended e-learning environment (BeLE) vi, v, 8, 178, 179, 180  
 Blended learning xvii, xviii, 179  
 Bottleneck 211  
 British 7, 194, 195, 199  
 Bukoba 231, 236  
 Buy-in 239

## C

Case study 21, 130, 133, 134, 150, 151, 154, 155, 217, 230  
 Centre for Public Education 120  
 Certificate of Secondary Education Examination (CSEE) vi, 105  
 Child-centred activities 21  
 Child-friendly 237  
 Children in Crossfire iii, 6, 30, 42  
 Children's Book Project (CBP) vi, 232, 236, 237, 238  
 Church Missionary Society Archive 195  
 Class prefects 257, 266  
 Classroom Design Thinking 96  
 Classroom discussions 119  
 Classroom management 43, 119  
 Classrooms 3, 35, 37, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 48, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 63, 64, 72, 88, 90, 91, 94, 96, 97, 99, 103, 104, 106, 108, 109, 110,

112, 117, 118, 119, 120, 123, 124, 127, 179, 207, 208, 212, 213, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 234, 237, 239, 248, 250,  
 Coca Cola 229  
 Co-curricular activities 264  
 Collaboration 3, 35, 37, 39, 43  
 College of Business Education (CBE) vi, xviii, xxvi, 242, 248  
 Colonialism 191, 196, 202  
 Commitment 8, 31, 41, 50, 54, 62, 72, 82, 83, 84, 191, 198, 212, 219, 222, 229, 239, 243  
 Community xii, xv, 5, 6, 17, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 48, 51, 57, 64, 87, 92, 93, 115, 121, 126, 128, 131, 136, 147, 160, 161, 179, 182, 185, 186, 207 - 214, 217, 218, 219, 220, 222, 223, 227, 231 - 237, 240  
 Community Participation 115, 213, 218, 219, 220, 220, 232, 235  
 Comparative indicators 24  
 Comparative reports 24  
 Compassion International 229  
 Competences 83, 109, 180, 124, 228, 230, 232  
 Competency based vi, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 248, 253  
 Competency-based education and training (CBET) vi, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 248  
 Complementary interventions 22  
 Compulsory 3, 37, 80, 81, 82, 212, 227  
 Computer xxi, 32, 33, 92, 140, 142, 143, 144, 157, 162, 180, 181, 182, 250  
 Conference x, xi, xiii, xix, xx, 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 200, 226, 227, 254  
 Conference x, xi, xiii, xix, xx, 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 200, 226, 227, 254  
 Conflict resolution 261, 269  
 Consolidate xi, 229, 238  
 Constraints 6, 11, 101, 140, 199  
 Constructive 2, 140, 144, 179, 181, 21

- Constructivist paradigm 107  
 Content analysis 139, 242, 248  
 Context xi, xvi, 3, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 22, 25, 27, 31–34, 39, 49, 50, 56, 65, 72, 73, 80, 86–94, 104–108, 111, 118, 119, 120, 125, 127, 128, 129, 180, 183, 188, 192, 198, 201, 210, 214, 228, 234, 236, 237, 240, 245, 247  
 Continuity 146, 147, 235  
 Conveyance 199  
 Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE) vi, 231, 235  
 Corporate 4, 5, 17, 21, 96, 142, 146, 165, 168, 171, 226–230, 238  
 Corporate Multilateral Agencies, 4, 5, 226–230, 238  
 Counselling 261  
 Cramming 251  
 Creativity 82, 87, 91, 94, 95, 96, 99, 102, 110, 123, 126, 195, 234  
 Critical theory 103, 104, 106, 107, 111, 112, 196  
 Cross-disciplinary 5  
 Culture 6, 10, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 50, 51, 52, 57, 58, 59, 61, 105, 132, 168, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 199, 201, 202, 227, 232, 233, 234, 236, 238, 251  
 Culture of reading 233  
 Curiosity 8, 86, 88, 89, 90, 93, 96, 99, 110, 112  
 Curriculum xviii, 3, 10, 12, 13, 15, 17, 19, 22, 28, 36, 40, 45, 52, 56, 60, 78, 79, 80, 82–85, 96, 98, 102, 103, 105, 106, 109, 110, 111, 112, 115, 118, 119, 124, 127, 128, 131, 132, 140, 141, 142, 146, 195, 196, 198, 199, 201, 212, 213, 216, 217, 227, 234, 235, 239, 246, 247, 250, 252, 254  
 Decentralisation by Devolution (D by D) vi, 221  
 Decentralisation vi, 208, 211, 214, 215, 218, 223  
 Decision-making 13, 74, 75, 165, 167, 173, 208, 211, 214, 215, 258, 259, 261, 266, 269, 270  
 De-colonise 199  
 Decoration 259  
 Demographic 117, 156  
 Descriptive analysis 242, 248  
 Descriptive statistics 179, 184, 185, 251  
 Design vii, xix, 3, 7, 8, 11, 19, 26, 38, 39, 41, 42, 63, 64, 76, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 105, 107, 110, 113, 120, 127, 130, 130, 133, 148, 154, 168, 178, 179, 180, 182, 183, 188, 192, 194, 195, 216, 217, 130, 248, 253  
 Design cycle 100  
 Design Thinker 96, 101  
 Design thinking iv, 7, 86, 88, 90, 90, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 101, 102  
 Design Thinking Process 88, 94, 95, 98  
 Development partners 1, 2, 4  
 Digital contents 179  
 Discipline 175, 207, 219, 222, 228  
 Disseminate 44, 247  
 District Education Officer (DEO) vi, 211  
 Diversity 4, 8, 50, 51, 52, 57, 58, 60, 61, 64, 155, 178, 208, 237  
 Document analysis 118, 230, 256, 262  
 Documentation xvi, 68, 73, 75, 170, 231  
 Dodoma Academic Staff Association (UDOMASA) viii, xxi, 171, 172, 175, 176

## D

- Dar es Salaam Institute of Technology (DIT) vi, 242, 248  
 Data Collection Instruments 155

## E

- Early Childhood Development (ECD) vi, xvi, 7, 30, 31, 32, 33, 36, 45, 127, 129

- Early Childhood Education (ECE) vi, xvi, 30, 78, 79, 85, 112, 115, 116, 128
- Early Childhood Education and Development
- E-books 179
- Economic development iii, xiii, 2, 5, 7, 37, 47, 48, 49, 53, 54, 55, 57, 63, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 75, 76, 87, 199, 228, 236
- Economic growth 5, 53, 69, 70
- Education and Training Policy (ETP) vii, 3, 7, 30, 37, 62, 78, 78, 81, 85, 192, 199, 231, 239
- Education For All (EFA) vi, xx, 14, 15, 117, 52, 91, 104, 117, 198, 200, 226, 227
- Education for All initiative 198
- Education for Self-Reliance (ESR) vii, xx, 104, 105, 114, 239, 244
- Education officers vi, xxi, 26, 44, 211
- Education policy vii, 3, 4, 7, 12, 13, 17, 35, 48, 57, 63, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 72, 74, 78, 79, 82, 117, 191, 192, 193, 194, 200, 202
- Education systems iii, viii, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 24, 25, 27, 119, 191, 193, 198, 244,
- Educational outputs 11
- E-exams 179
- Efficacy 40, 191, 202, 237, 238
- El Salvador 215
- E-learning vi, v, xviii, 8, 178, 180, 181, 183, 184, 187,
- Elementary 193
- E-library 179
- Elitist 199
- Empathy 94, 96, 97, 98, 101
- Empirical data 38, 61, 71, 183
- Employability 187, 247
- Enculturation 270
- End-user focus 96
- Epistemological 107, 112
- Equality 5, 52, 53, 60, 61, 158, 202, 205
- Equity 3, 4, 5, 36, 47, 48, 49, 52, 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 61, 197, 200, 226, 228
- E-school 179, 212
- Eurocentric 195, 196
- European Commission xviii, 244, 254
- European Development Fund 229
- European Union 229
- Evidence-based public policy making iii, 7, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 72, 76
- Evidence-based results 94
- Executive committee (EXCOM) 172
- Ex-official member 263
- Experimentalism 101
- Exploratory 242
- ## F
- Facebook 150, 151, 152, 159, 160, 161, 162, 167
- Face-to-face learning 178, 178, 180, 182
- Facilitators xix, 150, 233
- Facilities 243
- Family planning 28, 235
- Fee-free education 35, 78, 79, 83, 84
- Final phase 100
- Fluency 34, 92
- Focus group discussion 41, 2017, 218, 256, 262
- Formal education 24, 37, 79, 96, 142, 195, 199
- Formative assessment 100
- Free Primary Education (FPE) vii, 117, 119, 124
- Functional skills 62
- Fursa kwa Watoto ("Opportunities for Children") (FkW) vii, 6, 30
- ## G
- Gender xvii, 4, 5, 15, 43, 49, 50, 51, 52, 60, 61, 62, 128, 155, 161, 162, 181, 184, 185, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 200, 202, 233
- Gender inequality 61

Gender-sensitive 233  
 Girls' education (GE) 232  
 Global Affairs Canada 6, 7, 229  
 Global Education Monitoring (GEM) 24  
 Global Monitoring Report (GMR) vii, 13, 14, 15, 192, 216  
 Global Partnership for Education (GPE) 23, 24, 36  
 Globalisation i, xi, xii, xiii, xiv, xv, xx, 2, 4, 5, 8, 79, 80, 101, 178, 179, 191, 202, 202, 226, 228, 229, 231, 240  
 Governance xx, xxi, 6, 10, 13, 17, 70, 164, 165, 169, 170, 171, 173, 175, 176, 192, 208, 216, 238

## H

HakiElimu 3  
 Higher education xv, xvii, 5, 67, 68, 69, 70, 75, 76, 152, 160, 166, 179, 197  
 Higher Learning Institutions (HLI) 142, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 159, 160, 161, 164, 165, 166, 174  
 Holistic 16, 33, 59, 79, 82, 181, 188, 193, 230, 232, 236  
 Human capital 68, 69, 115, 195  
 Hypothesis 151, 153, 154, 155, 156, 158

## I

Implementers 4, 6, 20, 27, 30, 57, 96, 104, 105, 234, 238, 239, 244  
 Inclusion 3, 5, 37, 43, 47–53, 55, 56, 57, 59–62, 64, 65, 87, 131, 200  
 Inclusive education 5, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 56, 57, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 68, 131, 136  
 Independence 1, 2, 3, 49, 105, 191, 192, 196, 197, 198, 243  
 Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) vii, 202  
 Indigenous 123, 127, 193, 199  
 Informal assessment 100

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) vii, xix, xx, xxi, 5, 7, 140, 151, 164, 165  
 Inquisitive 250, 251  
 In-service training 19, 32, 58, 60, 137, 232, 234  
 Instagram 150, 167  
 Institutional support 249, 251, 253  
 Institutionalisation 234, 235  
 Institutions viii, x, xi, xiv, xx, 4, 55, 57, 68, 75, 84, 125, 142, 150–155, 159, 160, 161, 164, 165, 166, 167, 174, 175, 176, 192, 208, 228, 228, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254,  
 Instructional materials 33, 124, 128, 246, 247  
 Instructional skills 43  
 Instrumentation 155  
 Integration 48, 63, 124, 127, 141, 159, 179, 183, 253  
 Integrative thinking 101  
 Intellectual authority 107, 112  
 Intentional mindset 88, 89, 90, 96  
 Interactive xi, 43, 44, 152, 172, 179, 251  
 Interactive teaching approaches 43  
 Interdisciplinary 101, 102, 246  
 Internal indicators 24  
 International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) vii, 21  
 International Literacy Association 228  
 International Monetary Fund 229  
 Internet 143, 144, 148, 151, 155, 171, 172, 180, 182  
 Intervention 12, 15, 20, 22, 27, 31, 33, 34, 37–41, 43, 44, 111, 115, 116, 118, 119, 124, 127, 143, 227, 230, 231, 232, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240  
 Interview 95, 118, 151, 155, 156, 218, 250  
 Interviewee 249, 251  
 Irish aid 229  
 Iteration 97, 99, 100, 101

**K**

Kagera 231  
 Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) vii, 184  
 Katoke School Improvement Project 231  
 Katoke Teachers' College 231  
 Khan Academy 92  
 Kinondoni, 65, 207, 217, 218, 220, 222  
 Kiswahili 24, 50, 88, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 200, 202, 228  
 Knowledge based 244, 253, vii, 53  
 Knowledge-based education and training (KBET) 244, vii  
 Kosice self-governing region (KSR) vii, 73

**L**

Lakeside literacy 231  
 Learner-centred 251, xix, 92  
 Learners 236, 246, 2, 35, 51, 52, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 62, 63, 64, 87, 88, 91, 92, 93, 94, 117, 118, 121, 127, 131, 134, 136, 160, 189, 193, 230  
 Learning activities 90, 112, 140, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 187, 188, 234, 237, 247, 35, 37, 40  
 Learning aids 237  
 Learning materials 123, 124, 213, 237, 3, 19, 22, 35, 40, 44, 55, 56, 57, 58, 60, 62, 64  
 Learning outcomes 45, 87, 108, 109, 116, 120, 121, 124, 128, 153, 197, 202, 204, 206, 213, 226, 227, 228, 229, 233, 235, 237, 238, 245, 246, 6, 11, 14, 30, 32, 33, 34, 37, 38  
 Learning process 60, 65, 90, 107, 109, 113, 128, 142, 196, 231, 245, 249, 250, 251  
 Lesson plan 248, 253, 43  
 Liberalization 205, 2  
 Libraries 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 240,  
 Linguistics 197, xviii,  
 LinkedIn 150, 159,

Literacy 82, 91, 92, 123, 148, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 255, v, vii, xv, xvi, xviii, xx, 11, 14, 15, 22, 24, 33, 36, 56  
 Literacy and Numeracy Education Support (LANES) vii, 36  
 Literacy enhancement projects 226, 229, v  
 Literacy innovations 227, 229, 235, 238, 239  
 Literacy instruction 230, 234  
 Literacy projects 226, 227, 229, 230, 231, 233, 234, 238, 239, 240  
 Literature review 245, 7, 12, 16, 26, 68, 142, 168, 180  
 Local authorities 13, 210, 211  
 Local Government Authorities (LGAs) 211  
 Local government authority (LGA) vii  
 Local Government Reform Programme (LGRP) vii, 224, 214  
 Local indicators 24  
 Longitudinal data 24, 25

**M**

Mainstreaming 48  
 Makerere College, 197  
 Making iv, 7, 8, 21, 28, 55, 66, 67, 68, 71, 72, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 102, 103, 109, 123, 124, 127, 131, 135, 140, 145, 152, 168, 170, 175, 177, 189, 191, 209, 212, 213, 214, 215, 225, 234, 237  
 Manipulation 40, 259  
 Materials development 119, 123  
 Mbeya City Council (MCC) vii, 207, 218,  
 Mean 10, 20, 22, 24, 51, 100, 104, 157, 158, 185, 186, 209, 210, 218, 242, 248,  
 Measurable 227, 246,  
 Mentor 234



Mentorship 239  
 Methodology 107, 108, 116, 118, 133,  
 148, 162, 164, 169, 170, 177, 217,  
 230, 232, 233, 234, 237, 247  
 Mexico 215, 224  
 Millennium Development Goals  
 (MDGs) vii, 226, 227, 87  
 Millennium Summit 233  
 Ministry of Education and Training  
 227, 235, 239  
 Ministry of Education, Science and  
 Technology (MoEST) vii, 4  
 Mitigation 4  
 Mixed-methods 256  
 Modules 247  
 Monitoring 142, 192, 203, 205, 211,  
 214, 216, 220, 223, 231, 235, 247,  
 253, 255, vii, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 22,  
 24, 28, 38, 40  
 Monitoring and evaluation (m&e)  
 142, 247, 253, vii  
 Motivation 183, 188, 215, 243, 245  
 MTN 229  
 Muleba 236  
 Multilateral 226, 227, 228, 229, 230,  
 235, 237, 238, 239, 241, 4, 5, 27  
 multilateral agencies 226, 227, 228,  
 229, 230, 235, 238, 239, 5  
 MySpace 151, 159, 167,  
 MyZamana 159,  
 Mzumbe University (MU) 178, 183,  
 184, vii, xviii, 8

## N

National Council for Technical  
 Education (NACTE) 242, 248, vii  
 National curriculum 227, 239,  
 National Planning Authority 124, 129  
 National Policy on Disability 48, 51, 65,  
 National Strategy for Growth and  
 Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP/  
 MKUKUTA) vii, 36, 81, 85  
 National Strategy on Inclusive  
 Education (2009-2017) 52, 57,  
 59, 61

Nepal 215  
 Netherlands Royal Embassy 229, 231  
 Non-decision making 266  
 Non-governmental organizations 4,  
 229  
 Nyerere 63, 198, 199, 217

## O

Observation 40, 42, 43, 60, 91, 97,  
 118, 119, 124, 130, 139, 155, 170,  
 184, 242  
 One-party system 211  
 Online interaction (OI) 172  
 On-the-job training 249, 253  
 Ontological 107, 172  
 Open Door Management Policy  
 (ODMP) 164, 165  
 Open government partnership  
 (OGP) 166  
 Opportunities xi, xiii, xx, 4, 5, 6, 8,  
 19, 30, 43, 53, 68, 69, 70, 73, 78,  
 79, 80, 84, 85, 87, 89, 91, 92, 98,  
 100, 106, 107, 110, 111, 112, 121,  
 126, 127, 128, 130, 132, 133, 147,  
 175, 180, 194, 195, 197, 227, 229,  
 233, 236, 238, 243, 250, 253,  
 Optimism 101  
 Organisation for Economic  
 Cooperation and Development  
 (OECD) viii  
 Oversight 223, 235

## P

Pakistan xvi, 215  
 Paradigm 103, 107, 110, 170, 242  
 Para-professionals 119, 124  
 Paris Declaration 15, 16  
 Participants x, xi, xii, xiii, xiv, 2, 26,  
 99, 107, 129, 155, 156, 157, 159,  
 172, 182, 183, 207, 217, 233  
 Pedagogy 32, 35, 58, 87, 90, 109, 110,  
 111, 113, 124, 196, 198, 201, 202,  
 206, 234, 240, 243, 244, 253,  
 Peer supervision 212, 213, 215, 232,  
 234

Pen-and-paper examinations 179  
 People with special educational needs 47, 57  
 Perceptions 26, 61, 80, 189, 223, 239  
 Peri-urban 218, 220, 220  
 Phenomenon 2, 14, 71, 108, 140, 151, 161, 201  
 Philosophy xv, xx, 51, 52, 64, 104, 106, 114, 196, 239, 254  
 Physical environment 121  
 Physiognomies 179  
 Policy iii, iv, v, vii, xi, xiii, xiv, xvi, xvii, xx, xxi, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 42, 48, 49, 51, 56, 57, 62, 63, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 104, 105, 115, 116, 117, 118, 127, 128, 142, 148, 149, 164, 165, 166, 168, 171, 172, 173, 174, 177, 180, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 195, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 208, 211, 212, 213, 215, 217, 218, 222, 223, 225, 227, 231, 238, 239, 240, 254  
 Policy formulation 27, 66, 70  
 Policy makers and implementers 4, 27  
 Policy-practice gap 257, 266, 268  
 Political change 25  
 Postmodern era 223  
 Power dynamics 260  
 Power relations 111, 256, 257, 262, 268  
 Pre-school 3, 7, 10, 13, 30, 31, 35, 36, 80, 123, 124, 125  
 Pre-service 19, 81, 137, 204,  
 President's Office for Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG) viii, 211  
 Presidential Commission Report on Education 197,  
 Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP) viii, 3, 36, 37, 85, 200, 201, 212, 215, 218, 225

Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) viii, 34, 105, 207  
 Prime Minister's Office – Regional Administration and Local Government (PMORALG) viii, 128, 129  
 Problem solving 8, 86, 87, 91, 170, 181, 250, 251  
 Professional development (PD) viii, 8, 85, 86, 119, 123, 140, 142, 148, 190, 234, 246, 247, 254,  
 Proficiency 197  
 Project Coordination Unit (PCU) viii, 12, 16,  
 Project reports 230, 240

## Q

Qualitative data 139, 242, 248, 262  
 Qualitative learning 107  
 Qualitative methodology 107  
 Qualitative research 14, 103, 108, 113, 114, 130, 133, 138, 254  
 Quantitative data 39, 139, 242, 248, 256, 262  
 Quantitative learning 107  
 Questionnaire 25, 26, 130, 134, 139, 151, 155, 156, 184, 207, 218, 242, 248, 250, 251, 252

## R

Random 130, 139, 183  
 Randomised control trials (rct) viii, 32, 33, 38, 39, 42,  
 Reading, writing and arithmetic (3rs) 90, 91, 93, 232, 234  
 Rectors 242, 248,  
 Reference books 250,  
 Reflect 14, 15, 25, 49, 87, 93, 96, 97, 100, 180, 192, 236, 239, 244, 250  
 Reflect phase 100  
 Reflective learning activities 179  
 Relativist ontology 107  
 Replication 227, 237  
 Representative Council of Learners 261

- Research approach 130, 154, 242, 248,  
 Research design 154, 241, 242, 248, 256, 261  
 Research method 38, 68, 134, 163, 247, 248,  
 Research questions 38, 105, 106, 141, 155, 183, 229  
 Researcher xviii, xxi, 7, 16, 28, 30, 31, 48, 67, 69, 72, 77, 106, 107, 108, 134, 144, 153, 154, 155, 159, 160, 161, 162, 169, 184, 234  
 Resource-constrained 236,  
 Resources 8, 13, 17, 35, 36, 41, 43, 44, 48, 51, 52, 53, 54, 57, 59, 62, 65, 80, 81, 83, 86, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 94, 99, 116, 119, 123, 127, 130, 131, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 140, 141, 142, 173, 177, 178, 179, 210, 216, 222, 223, 232, 235, 237, 241, 243, 249, 250, 252, 253  
 Respondents 25, 26, 139, 143, 144, 145, 155, 158, 159, 185, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253  
 Room to Read (RtR) viii, 232
- ## S
- Sample 42, 96, 151, 153, 156, 158, 184, 242, 248  
 Satellite schools 39,  
 Save the children 34, 229  
 Scholarly Personal Narrative (SPN) viii, 164, 169, 170, 177  
 School Committee (SC) 207, 208, 211, 212, 214, 215, 218–224, 256, 258, 262, 263, 264, 265, 267, 268  
 School Committee Supervision 221  
 School governance 208, 224, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 267–271  
 School Infrastructural Developments 236  
 School prefects 257  
 School-Based Management (Sbm) viii, 212, 213, 214, 215, 225  
 School-Development Plans 211, 213, 215, 222,  
 Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and human-centred Design (STEMx) iv, viii, 8, 86, 90, 96  
 Second Five-Year Development Plan 197  
 Secondary Education Development Plan (SEDP) 201  
 Secondary Education Development Programme (SEDP) viii, 3  
 Self-confidence 198, 245  
 Self-employment 245  
 Self-regulations 238  
 Semi-structured interviews 256  
 Small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs) viii, xviii, 73  
 Social change xi, xii, xiv, 1, 2, 77  
 Social media iv, xix, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 167  
 Social networking 152, 157, 159, 160, 162, 163  
 Social wellbeing 235  
 Socio-cultural beliefs 256, 257, 262, 265  
 Socio-cultural xv, 5, 69, 192, 195, 200, 228, 236  
 Socio-economic 1, 2, 14, 50, 68, 70, 134, 198, 228, 236  
 Spoon-feeding 251  
 Stakeholder iii, xi, xiii, xiv, xxi, 1, 4, 6, 8, 14, 16, 18, 21, 22, 25, 27, 30, 44, 48, 67, 68, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 82, 84, 85, 91, 115, 116, 123, 142, 145, 146, 147, 164, 165, 216, 231, 236, 237, 239, 246  
 Standard deviation (SD) viii, 185, 186, 242, 248  
 Standards 34, 35, 37, 58, 121, 128, 193, 211, 216, 222, 245, 246, 247, 250, 253, 255  
 Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) viii, 139, 218

- Stereotyping 61, 200
- Strategies xi, 4, 7, 31, 37, 40, 41, 42, 43, 45, 51, 54, 58, 74, 90, 117, 119, 133, 135, 178, 179, 217, 229, 230, 235, 237, 245, 247, 252
- Strengthening Education Systems in East Africa (SESEA) iii, viii, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 119,
- Structural adjustment policie 2
- Student characteristics 25, 179, 183, 188,
- Student engagement 179, 180, 182, 183, 185, 186, 187, 189
- Student government 256, 258, 262–268
- Student mobility 25
- Students assembly 266
- Subjectivist epistemology 107
- Supervision 17, 19, 44, 81, 194, 212, 213, 215, 216, 217, 219, 221, 232, 234, 235, 239
- Sustainability v, xxi, 16, 22, 23, 67, 74, 226, 227, 230, 231, 234, 235, 236, 237, 239
- Sustainable development viii, xx, 1, 2, 5, 31, 68, 87, 102, 226, 227, 255,
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs ) viii, 2, 5, 7, 31, 32, 68, 87, 102, 205, 226, 227
- Sustainable schooling 11, 15
- Swedish government 229, 232
- Synthesis 102
- System-wise approaches 11
- T**
- Take Making into Schools 90
- Taking Making 8, 86, 88, 96, 97, 99, 102
- Talkie-chalk 179
- Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) viii, 2, 9,
- Tanzania Higher Learning Institutions Trade Union (THTU) viii, 174
- Tanzania Inclusive Education Policy 63
- Tanzania Institute of Accountancy (TIA) viii, 242, 248,
- Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) viii, 205,
- Teacher professional development 148, 234, 254,
- Teacher reflective practice 43
- Teacher turnover 25
- Teaching and Learning Environment 49, 79, 80, 112, 133, 179, 180, 207, 212, 213, 219, 222, 223, 251, 253
- Teamwork 96
- Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) viii, 242, 244, 254,
- Technical institutions v, 242, 243, 244, 245, 248, 249, 250, 251, 253, 254
- Technical skills 244, 249
- Technology vi, vii, viii, xiii, xvii, xix, xxi, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 18, 30, 69, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 86, 90, 140, 141, 148, 149, 151, 162, 163, 164, 165, 179, 180, 188, 189, 190, 242, 248, 252
- Textbooks 19, 179, 193, 234, 250
- The Arusha Declaration 2, 9
- The district education officer (DEO) vi, 211, 212,
- The Katoke School Improvement Project 231
- The New Education and Training Policy 2014 81
- Thematic curriculum 124
- Thinker 61, 94, 96, 97, 99, 101, 203
- Time management 269
- T-independent 156
- Tinker 94, 97, 99
- Tokenism 259, 271
- Trade unions 23, 165, 170, 174, 176
- Traditional instructional approaches 245, 248
- Transformative agents 107
- Transformative learning 87, 88, 91, 93

Transparency 13, 164, 165, 168, 173,  
174, 175, 177, 211, 212  
Triangulated evaluation reports 230  
Triangulation 242, 248  
Truancy 207, 222  
Tusome Vitabu Project 231, 233, 235,  
236, 237, 238, 241  
Twitter 150, 151, 159, 161  
Two-door Perspective Approach 167  
Typologies 260

## U

Uganda xvi, 11, 24, 25, 26, 35, 115,  
117, 118, 123, 124, 128, 129, 197,  
216, 225, 240, 254  
Unauthentic student participation 268  
United Nations (UN) viii, ix, 2, 5, 6,  
14, 30, 65, 102, 203, 205, 226, 227,  
228, 229  
United Nations Development  
Programme 229  
United Nations Educational,  
Scientific and Cultural  
Organisation (UNESCO) viii, 13,  
15, 21, 23, 24, 28, 52, 59, 117, 141,  
142, 149, 192, 197, 202, 203, 205,  
216, 225, 229, 232, 237, 240, 254,  
255  
United Nations High Commission  
for Refugees 229  
United Nations International  
Children Education Fund  
(UNICEF) ix, 30, 31, 39, 45, 46,  
229, 231, 232  
United Nations Millennium  
Development Goals (MDGs) vii,  
87, 226, 227  
United States Agency for  
International Development 229  
Universal Primary Education (UPE)  
ix, 2, 87, 113, 117  
Universal Secondary Education 3  
University of Dodoma (UDOM) viii,  
xvii, xix, xx, xxi, 165, 170, 171,  
173, 174, 175, 177

University of Dodoma Academic  
Staff Association (UDOMASA),  
viii, xxi, 171, 172, 175, 176  
University of New South Wales 231  
Unstructured interviews 230  
UWEZO 24, 34, 35, 46, 228

## V

Viber 159  
Vision 2025 2, 36, 180, 238, 244, 253  
Vodacom 229

## W

Weber's Human Capital Theory 68,  
222  
WhatsApp 150, 159, 167,  
Whole-school development plans  
(WSDPs) ix, 212, 221  
Wiki leaks 167, 221  
Word Education Coordinators  
(WECs) ix, 215, 216, 221  
Work Performance 219, 220, 221,  
223  
World Bank 6, 10, 13, 15, 17, 18,  
21, 23, 24, 29, 31, 32, 33, 46, 76,  
105, 109, 114, 117, 199, 202, 204,  
206, 224, 229, 243, 255,  
World Vision 229  
World War I 194

## Y

Young Men's Christian Association  
(YMCA) ix, 125  
Young Women's Christian  
Association (YWCA) ix, 125

## Z

Zanzibar Development Vision 263,  
272  
Zanzibar Education Decree 258, 263,  
272  
Zanzibar Education Development  
Programme (ZEDP) 263, 272  
Zanzibar Education Policy 257, 263,  
271



*Education in Tanzania in the Era of Globalisation Challenges and Opportunities* is a product of papers presented at a National Education Conference held in Dodoma, Tanzania in November 2016 and organised by the Aga Khan University-Institute for Educational Development, East Africa (AKU-IED-EA). At present, Tanzania's development direction is guided by Vision 2025, which aims to achieve a high quality livelihood for its people by 2025. The attainment of Vision 2025 will depend largely on rapid socio-economic development based on several social and economic pillars including, most importantly, education. Clearly, for Tanzania, the scope and quality of education remains the single most important prerequisite to the attainment of Vision 2025 and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The individual chapters in this publication, and their collective thrust, discuss the challenges in the education system in good faith and in the spirit of cooperation and collaboration guided by the belief that it is not the responsibility of the Government alone to see how these can be addressed. AKU IED EA has identified this as the responsibility of all well-meaning corporate bodies and citizens, and initiated the first conference of its type as its contribution to the effort. The conference, as well as the publication, has to be seen as a model of good practice for universities in terms of sharing knowledge, experience, and practice with other stakeholders who are not in the academy, and more so, with politicians as well as government policy planners.

The various authors of *Education in Tanzania in the Era of Globalisation Challenges and Opportunities* discuss issues within the context of the Tanzanian political economy against the effects of globalization and seek to initiate a new kind of debate that is long overdue; a debate aimed at charting out appropriate strategies whose objective is to improve the quality of education in Tanzania so that it becomes a useful vehicle in enhancing processes of social change, transformation and development.

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